

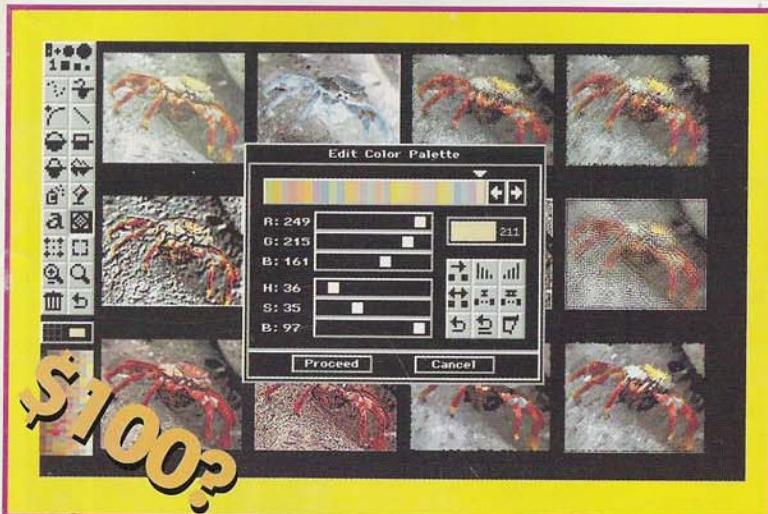
COLOUR
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Australian Commodore &

AMIGA

For Professional and Home Users

Review

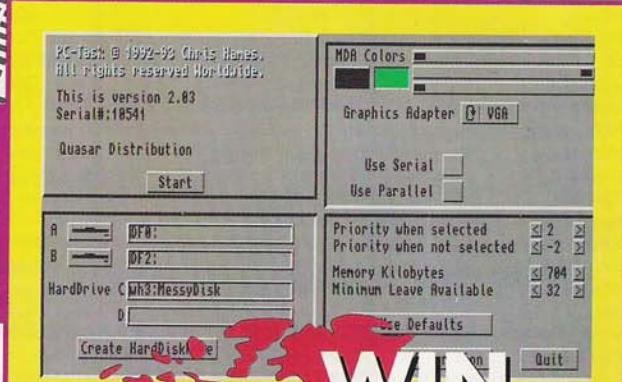


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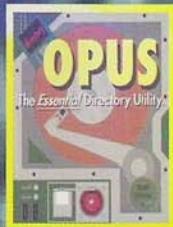
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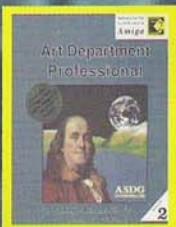
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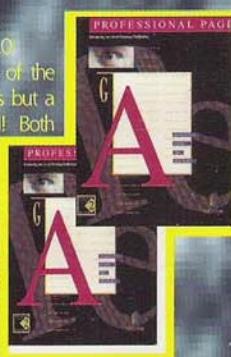
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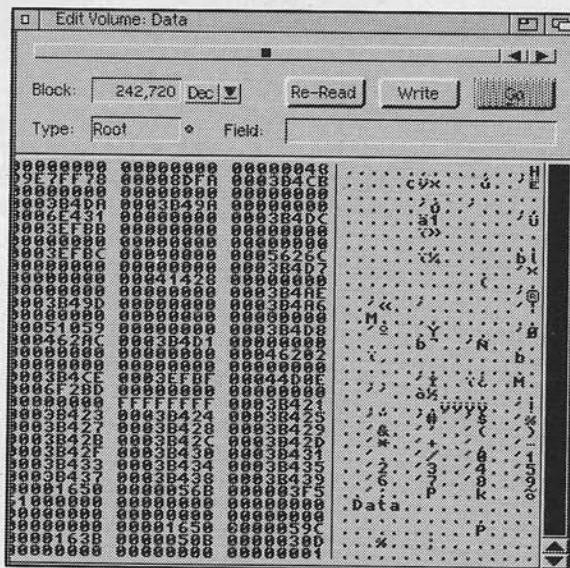
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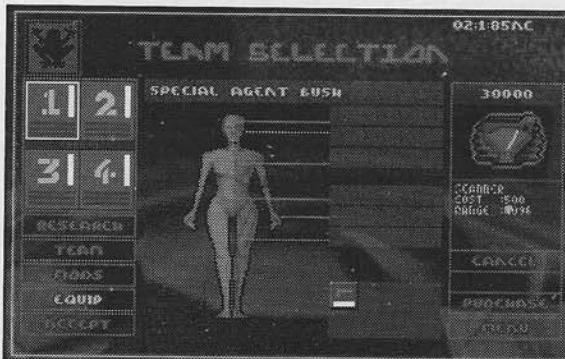
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Editorial



In the United States, the Amiga market is becoming increasingly specialist. Vertical market applications dominate. Video and multimedia products continue to experience dramatic growth in demand and performance. On the other side of the globe, Amiga CD32 has been launched, and consumers are devouring the new compact disc based technology with all the vigour of school kids eating fairy floss.

Innovatronics, the people who publish CanDo and *Directory Opus*, are U.S. based. They've announced changes to the licensing of the runtime parts of their authoring software to reflect their view of the Amiga world. Future CanDo application authors will no longer be able to freely distribute CanDo decks for commercial use. Innovatronics cite the shrinking U.S. Amiga market, combined with more complex, more expensive Amiga solutions typically in use, as justification for the move.

Once again on the other side of the globe, CD32 owners are gladly devouring *James Pond*, a very average title for this new platform, with glee. The reasoning is simple. It's available, and it's AGA.

Yes, the Amiga market has become a diverse and complex place. It's certainly a difficult one for any one magazine to address. And yet, that is what we face. In Australia, many Amiga owners are upgrading to the Amiga 1200. There is no argument about that. A number are also stepping up to the '030 based Amiga 4000. Many too are sticking with the A500.

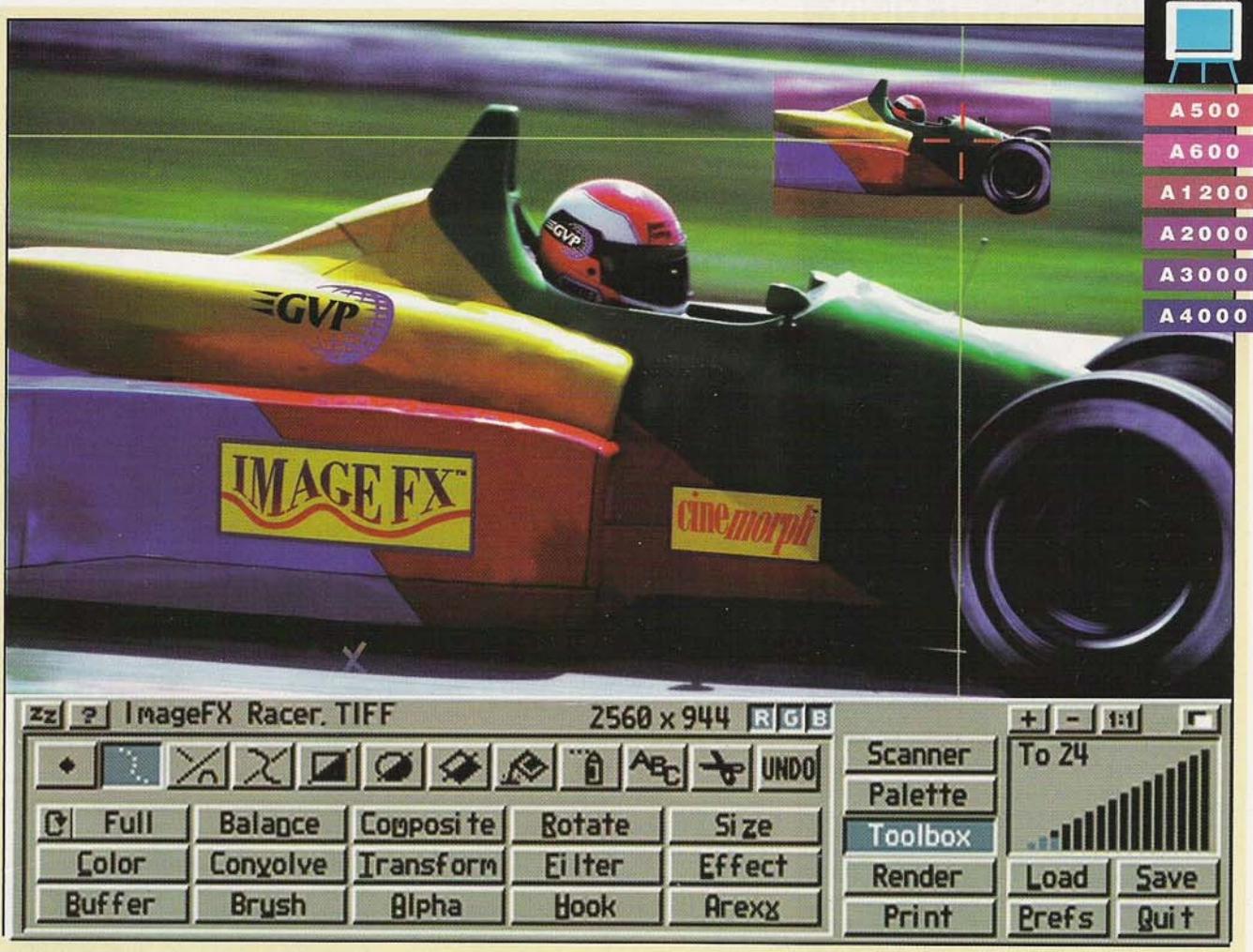
Very recent changes in Amiga distribution in the states have seen increasing sales volumes of the new machines. Creative Computers is now an Amiga distributor and are said to be moving very good numbers of the AGA Amigas.

It's all encouraging stuff. Clearly Commodore will probably concentrate on Amiga CD32 for some time to come. How well it does will decide how many other new Amiga products we see.

The potential is exciting. More AGA machines means more CD32 software. At a glance the CD32 may appear to be nothing more than a glorified games console. However, in many ways it is the realisation of the dream computer manufacturers of the early eighties fostered. A single gadget which could deliver all or most home entertainment. Married with the family television, CD32 is just that.

It plays music CDs, video CDs (with help from the add-on MPEG module), computer games, and multimedia learning discs. In addition, it is likely the same device could offer the ability to access remote information systems, or function as a complete computer system. CD32 may be the path to mass consumption of interactive multimedia. Given the strong sales the machine is already enjoying in the UK, the market appears ready.

Andrew Farrell



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Perhaps other Image Processing packages will someday catch on to the power and flexibility of **ImageFX**. However, if you're serious now about Image Processing, you need the software that was born ready. No limitations. No costly additions!

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UPDATE COLUMN

As I mentioned before, we now have the Bruce Smith range of technical reference books. Talk about "Hot Cakes".

MASTERING AMIGA AMOS: It describes in detail, how to plan out a design for creating games and covers everything from Easy AMOS, to AMOS Pro. This is the best available book on AMOS in Australia.

MASTERING AMIGA SYSTEM: This one covers in great detail, how to program the custom chips and the operating system using the "C" language.

AMIGA DOS 3: Actually, it covers from DOS 2 right up to DOS 3. It describes in detail, the use of the CLI commands contained in the C directory.

THE 1200 GUIDE: Like the AMIGA DOS 3 manual, except that it also covers almost everything about Workbench 3, its use, how to customise it, and hints and tips for getting the most out of your new machine.

MASTERING AMIGA ASSEMBLY: Most of the Bruce Smith books have been written by Paul Overaa. His ability to educate in the most simple way is amazing and this book is no exception. Assembly language is just about the hardest language to learn and so the way you are taught is crucial. However, Overaa's techniques, laid out in this book, will teach you assembly language quickly and easily without all the unnecessary jargon.

THE BIG NEWS THIS MONTH IS

OVERKILL! This is the first AGA game for the A1200/4000 written in Australia! A little like *Defender*, guard your men on the surface of the planet while they destroy the crystals belonging to the alien fleet. Meanwhile, you destroy the waves of attacking aliens and progress to the next level.

The game runs in 256 colours at 50 frames a second. The gameplay, sound, look and feel of the game is what should be expected from an AGA Amiga.

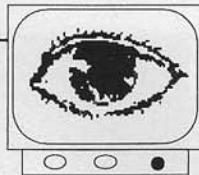
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Media Watch



Amiga on air in '86!

It seems Kevin Gleeson of South Arm, Tasmania takes the prize for the earliest Amiga broadcast in Australia. He was responsible for putting the grandfather of Amigas, the old A1000, on air whilst working as News and Sports Director at HSV7 Melbourne. In case you're wondering, that's a TV channel.

At the time the station was using an Ampex AVA graphics system (equivalent to the Quantel paintbox). Costing around \$200,000, the Ampex was a real screamer back then. However the more affordable Amiga was quicker to get results for titling the monitor behind Peter Landy on Seven's Big League - the VFL roundup programme on Saturday evenings.

After some trickery with frame stores and NTSC conversion, the Amiga graphics made it to air and since then Kevin has gone on to own the A500, 2000, 3000 and now the 4000/040. However, there's a PC on the desk too these days - just to keep an eye on the opposition who according to Kevin are fast closing. All I can say is check out the reports in our news section on the Newtek screamer Kevin!

Well, unless someone can beat the date in Kevin's report, I think he deserves something ... maybe next month.

Sneakers

Both Steve Muller of Wulkuraka and Daniel Everton of Sunshine Beach, in Queensland, spotted an Amiga keyboard and 1084S monitor (with the badge covered) on publicity hangers for the video release of *Sneakers*. The special offer was for an Amstrad Mega PC, but somebody down the line obviously uses a REAL computer!

And Stephen McGovern of Moorooka, also in Queensland, spotted the distinctive shape of an Amiga 500 on a Channel 10 advert, where the old trouper was being used to teach underprivileged children in a Papua New

Guinea school. It was only a glimpse, but it's amazing how your eye gets tuned to these things ...

"Sunday" and "Compass"

R L Thomson of Shepparton, Victoria, spotted an Amiga analysing land use information on the ABC "Sunday" program on the 2nd of August. As a bonus, on the same day and same channel the "Compass" program showed Amigas being used to reassemble fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls in a paint program. Good enough for a free sub, Andrew?

Amiga vs IBM vs Mac

The definitions of Amiga, IBM and Mac have been forthcoming. Here's a few from Michael James who writes:

- Amiga - A Tree. Slow growing, but it will last forever. Dead easy to get going, just chuck the seeds in the ground. Many uses. Becoming more common.

IBM - Cactus. They're everywhere and you cannot get rid of them. Don't need much to keep them growing, but dead hard to start. Every time you turn around, you get pricked.

Mac - Pot. Purely for hippies. Easy to get, but very expensive.

(See Letters on pages 14 and 15 for another version.)

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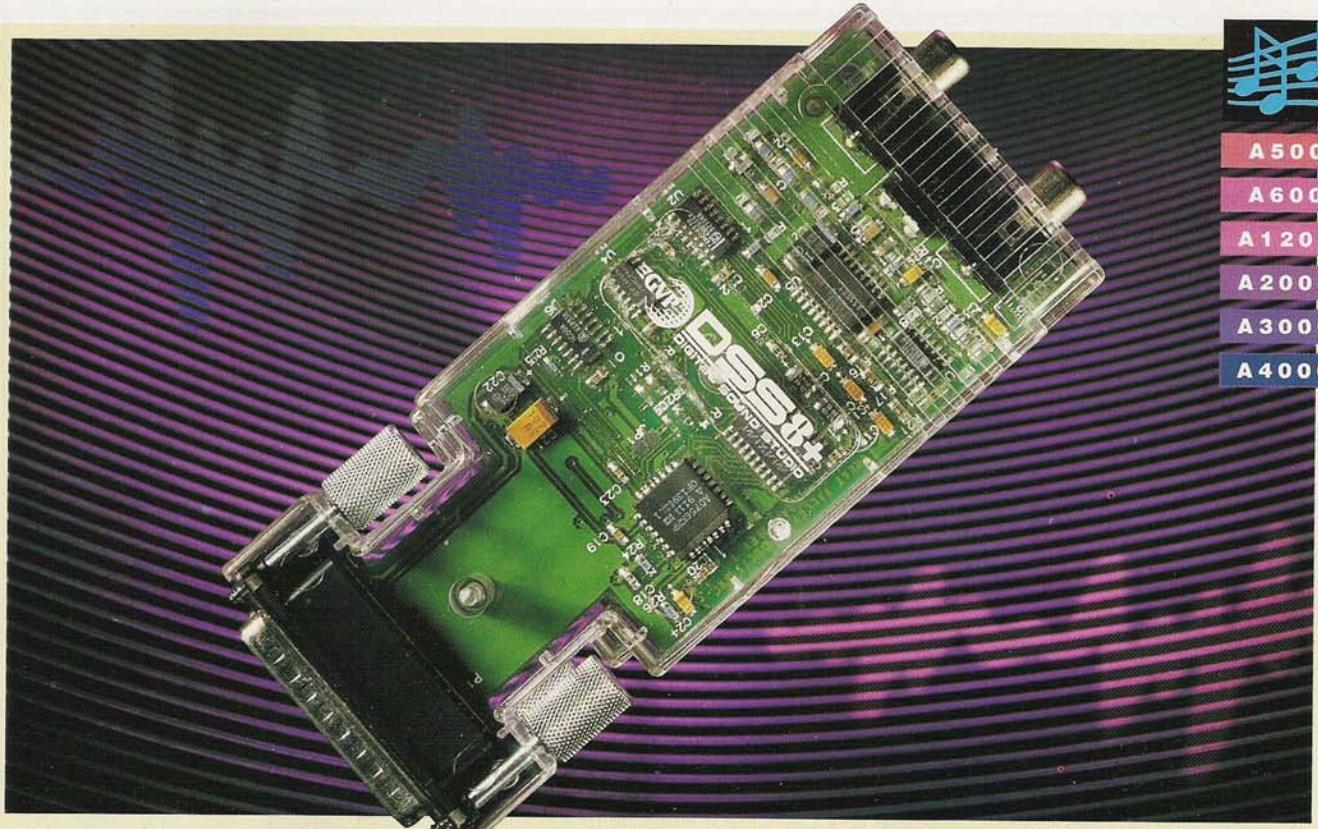
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Notepad

Merlin offers high power graphics

The high powered Merlin 24 bit graphics board, which offers 50 megapixels per second, a blitter 40 times faster than standard, and a throughput of more than 20 MB per second when used in a Zorro III slot, is now available in Australia.

Of course the board will work fine with Workbench, offering resolutions up to 2048 x 2048 in 256 colours, and includes *TV-Paint 2.0* and a suite of graphic and animation software. The Amiga is consolidating its position as a mid to high end graphics machine with this sort of low cost hardware - for \$1195, Merlin offers the kind of power that used to cost the thick end of a hundred thousand dollars.

Spectrum hot on Merlin's tail

On the subject of monster graphics boards, the GVP EGS-28/24 Spectrum board will be out in Australia pretty much as you read this. It's the little brother to the EGS-110/24, and it offers considerably more power than the established Retina board but at much the same price. Maximum resolution is 1600 x 1280 in 256 colours, it'll do up to 200Hz vertical scan rate, more than twice the Retina's maximum, and its passthrough design means that you really CAN use it with one monitor, never needing a second for incompatible programs.

If you DO want multiple monitors, you can run two monitors from one Spectrum or install several Spectrum

boards all showing different things at once. The EGS library system means that, in theory at least, no correctly written program will be incompatible with the board. The Spectrum board will work in Amiga 2000, 3000 or 4000 machines, in Zorro II or III slots. Its Australian price is not yet finalised, but it'll be carried by Power Peripherals on (03) 532 8553, fax (03) 532 8556.

Cygnus ED hits V3.5

ASDG's *Cygnus ED* and Oxxi's *TurboText* are the two most popular text editors on the Amiga. If you need high powered text manipulation but not word processor features, they're the way to go. After a quite long stagnant period, *Cygnus ED* has taken a considerable step forward with v3.5.

Many new features have been added, but the biggest changes are improved ARexx support - now more than 100 commands - and a large improvement to the macro system, which is now much more powerful and includes a powerful editor. There's also a whole new manual. *Cygnus ED* 3.5 is available for \$149.



Amiga CD32 will be available from Brashs from October 1st and other leading Amiga resellers shortly thereafter for around \$600. The MPEG module will follow soon after for around \$400 and allow you to play video CDs.

On October 15th we will also see the release of the much-rumoured killer game title Jurassic Park.



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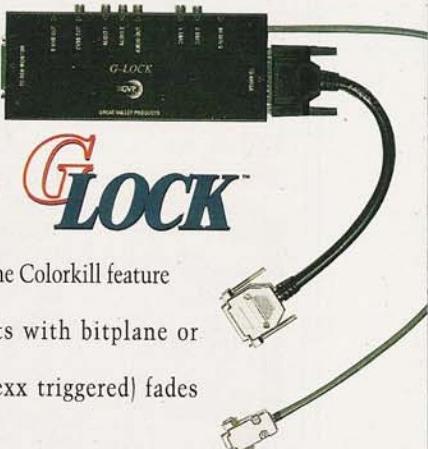
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PageStream 3 is suffering from feature creep - where the development team keeps adding more stuff and stops the package coming out on time. But the latest addition looks very much worth it - *PageStream 3* will deal with *Professional Page* format files, allowing users of the currently leading desktop publishing package to move to the new system painlessly.

Upgrades to *PageStream* for *Pro Page* users will be \$US175. The *Pro Page* format hasn't been published, so the feat's been achieved by reverse engineering; taking the files and figuring out how they work, rather than starting off with the format. To this end, Soft-Logik got in various people's oddball *Pro Page* files, to make sure their decoder worked.

PageStream 3 will deal with *Professional Page* files

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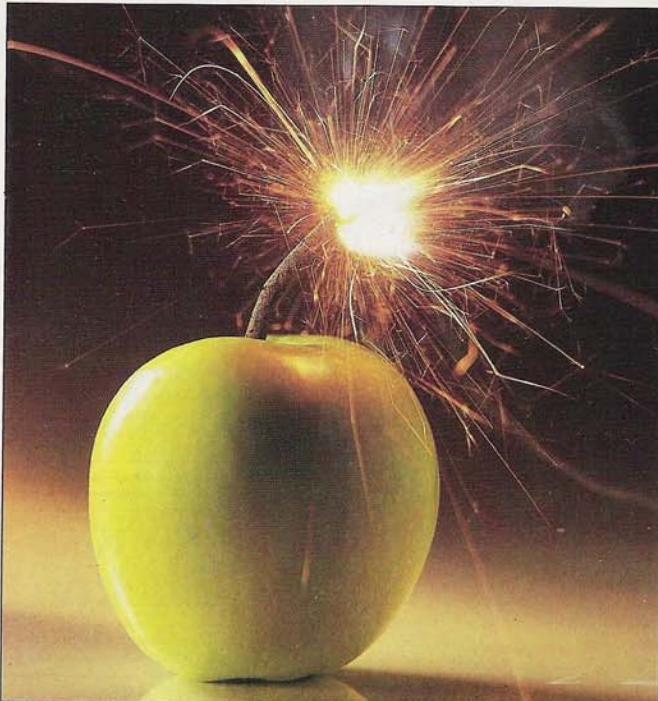
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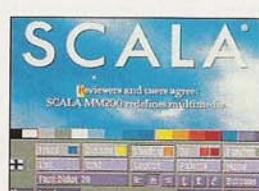
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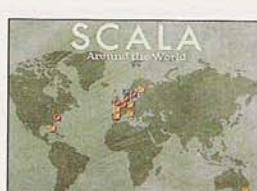
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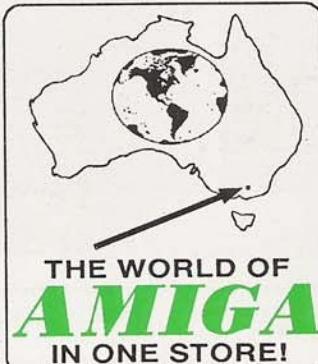
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Fish on CD

Fred Fish's freely distributable software library has been going, literally, since the Amiga's birth. It's now got more than 900 disks and various people have taken it upon themselves to put compilations of these disks onto CD-ROM discs for the sake of convenience. Now Fred himself has got into the game.

There will be a monthly Fish CD-ROM containing several categories of material, including new material received since the previous month's CDROM, a continuously updated set of widely used "base tools" such as archivers, editors, compilers, text processors, etc, and possibly a few toys

like the most popular PD games, and a random selection of older material on a space available basis.

There will also be a quarterly CD-ROM containing the archived form of all the previous new material from the monthly CD-ROM's to date, plus as much of the floppy distribution as will fit.

When the floppy distribution reaches 1000 disks, there will be a CD-ROM with the contents of the entire floppy library (assuming it can be made to fit) and the library will migrate to CDROM distribution only (expected to happen in early 1994). This gives floppy users some time to upgrade, but as of disk

910 not all the new stuff will be on the floppies anyway. The only way to get EVERYTHING will be to get the CD, or get access to someone who has.

Initial prices to Australia will be \$US25 for any CD-ROM ordered before the CD-ROM master is committed to production, which is expected to be late September or early October, and \$US35 per CDROM, for any ordered later.

For more information contact Fred Fish at 1835 East Belmont Drive Tempe, AZ 85284 USA, or fax USA (602) 491-0048.

Amiga Expo in Melbourne

World of Commodore Australia 1993 was a great success with large attendances and great bargains to be had by all. The only problem for many people was that it was, as usual, held in Sydney.

To make amends for this, one of Melbourne's active Amiga Users Groups is holding an Amiga Expo for one day on Sunday the 31st of October 1993 at the Essendon Community Centre, Moonee Ponds.

The list of exhibitors is growing with most of Melbourne's big dealers already signed up. OpalTech with their OpalVision board will be showing off their latest hardware and software. Computa Magic and MVB Computer Supplies will be there. Power Peripherals are also coming with their latest hardware and there will be many other exciting things to see. Virtual Reality will be there, along with Amiga based market research and Chris Hames with his latest versions of *Dir Work* and *PC-Task*.

During the day there will be free seminars running, covering topics from beginner to advanced.

A fantastic door prize donated by

two local dealers will be won by the lucky person whose entry voucher is selected.

Hopefully there will be some great bargains to be had like those at World of Commodore.

If you live in Melbourne and missed out on World of Commodore then keep your diary free and don't miss an action packed day!

Enquiries to: North West Amiga Users Group, PO Box 248, Coburg Vic 3058. Fax: (03) 376 6180.

TBCPlus desktop video must

And while we're talking about GVP, they've also released the TBCPlus, an internal broadcast quality video processing card for any Amiga with a free Zorro II slot. The TBCPlus's features include infinite window eight bit 4:2:2 time base correcting with all digital signal processing, real time 24 bit frame grabbing and frame buffering with software provided, and a full SMPTE/EBU time code receiver/generator operating in all VITC/LTC formats and standards.

The TBCPlus transcodes composite and Y/C inputs into simultaneous composite and Y/C outputs and includes full video processing amp controls. It

includes a three channel video input switcher, and a programmable special effects generator. The TBCPlus will also convert NTSC, PAL or SECAM video formats to NTSC or PAL. Again, the Australian price isn't finalised but it'll be distributed by Power Peripherals.

NewTek Screamer burns rubber

NewTek, makers of the popular American format Video Toaster video effects system, have released an outboard graphics processor for the system that makes it the fastest graphics machine per dollar ever seen - and one of the fastest in the world, full stop. The new Screamer has nothing to do with the Amiga architecture that drives the Toaster - it plugs in on the outside.

It contains four MIPS R4400 processors, giving over 600MIPS system performance, or about 30 times the power of an A4000/040. What this means is that for \$US10,000 or so plus the price of the Toaster, you get animation and rendering performance that used to cost, that's right, the thick end of a hundred grand. Unfortunately the Toaster is still NTSC format, which makes it useless for Australia (and most other countries), where the PAL broadcast system is used.

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Letters TO THE EDITOR

CD32, WB2.X, SCSI on the 1200?

1) Recently in a British magazine I came across the technical advice column, where somebody asked if you can configure an A500's trapdoor RAM as chip RAM. Their reply was yes, but they didn't say how. Can you tell me how to do this?

2) Since getting WB2.0, *SysInfo* gives me, and my best friend, different information - I now run at 0.97 times normal 500/600 speed. And my memory is now listed as 24-bit DMA. What do these mean? Why the change?

3) When I checked out an A1200 in my local computer store, I found it has a SCSI hard drive, not an IDE. Why do Australian 1200s get a better drive than UK ones?

4) Will the Amiga CD 32 come with Workbench 4? Will keyboards be immediately available for it? Is it basically a 32 bit, AGA CDTV with a new ROM in a console case? Will it be able to play normal music CDs? And, most importantly, are Commodore going to advertise it?

*Sam Moran,
Wagga Wagga*

Ed: 1) Thanks for reminding us about the chip RAM hack - we'll publish an article on it soon. It's too complex to explain in a letter answer, but not too complex for many users to perform.

2) Workbench 2 has higher system overheads because of its much greater power - it makes your machine run significantly slower. On accelerated ma-

chines you'd never notice, but it does show up on 68000 systems. And your RAM always had 24 bit DMA - it's just that only WB2 lets *SysInfo* see it!

3) The A1200 you looked at DID have an IDE drive. The IDE drive is controlled by the scsi.device, because the controller hardware emulates a SCSI drive. It's not SCSI, though, so it's slower, you can only plug in two drives, and you can't use a SCSI drive with a 1200 without a trapdoor expansion board.

4) Workbench 4 is still very much in development, and will match the AAA chip set, the next one up from the AGA in the 1200. You can't plug a keyboard into the CD 32 as it stands, but there's a honking great expansion connector on the back so obviously it's a future option. Since the CD 32 uses cut down A1200 hardware, it'll run WB3.x. It IS basically an AGA CDTV. It DOES play music CDs, and video CDs too with the MPEG module. And Commodore have farmed CD 32 publicity out to a different company, so we should see some pretty serious ads.

A1200 - FPU and clock?

I intend to buy an A1200 soon, but I've noticed that an FPU and clock are options. Are these options available at the moment, or is CBM holding out on us all?

Also, is there anything like Toaster Cozy for the A3000 available for the console Amigas?

Dan Langford
Brisbane, Qld

Ed: Well Dan, Commodore make A1200s with coprocessors in them, but the standard Australian model doesn't have one. You could order in a coprocessor version but it will probably take a while. A better solution would be to buy one of the RAM expansion boards which include a coprocessor socket, and the processor in there can be clocked much faster than the Commodore version. Commodore don't make a clock for the A1200, but there are third party solutions - like Microbotics' 12 A'Clock - which do the job for about \$50.

There's no extra video hardware for the console machines.

Australian National Analogy Festival

Following your July article, it seems to me that PCs and their use are analogous to the experience of shopping in Sydney. Let me explain.

David Jones. Not many about, but good at what they do. Friendly environment. You can enter the store from many entrances on many levels, frequently assisted by a doorman. You can get everything from fashion to fridges. The prices are sometimes higher, but so's the quality. A bit light-on in everyday items like food, but what there is tastes fine. Very flexible, not always cheap, but excellent value. *The Amiga*.

Target. They're everywhere. All the same - but some are bigger and have better service. Access via the one wide entrance. Quite a large range of products, many of them Target's own brand. You won't find a fridge but they've got a pretty good esky. Plenty of food, but it's all pre-packaged and you don't have a choice about the presentation. Wide aisles, simple signs to guide you. Plenty of checkouts, short queues, easy and painless. *The Macintosh*.

Woolworths. Access by a single turnstile, and you'd better grab a trolley. Looks OK, but cheaper than Target. Lots of shelves packed to the rafters with thousands of products that are really just different versions, sizes and shapes of the same things, each claim-

ing to be "new and improved" and "the product of the latest research". No fridge, but a tacky wine cooler. The use by dates aren't far in the future. The proprietors claim new, improved methods of payment and quicker response to the shopper's demands, but the checkout still has queues. *Windows on a name brand PC.*

Franklins. Turnstiles and trolleys again, but at least without the pretensions. Crowded, narrow, cluttered aisles. The same stuff you found at Woolies, only cheaper. Most of the products work if you're careful, read foreign instructions and stick well within the expiry dates. No fridge, but plenty of styrofoam stubbie holders. The checkouts take time. Lots of it. Next to a howling baby. You get what you pay for, with a *PC clone*.

On a more serious note, the discount entry vouchers for World of Commodore and the Home Computer Show were great, but they were printed on the backs of articles! Why not place ads on such backing pages?

Reg Forsaith
Lilyfield NSW

Game prices too high?

After reading the May issue, especially the letter from Cameron Dry, I had to air my views. I'm from England myself, and computer equipment in Australia is at least double the price in the UK, as well as being 4-7 months behind. A £3.95 UK magazine costs \$13.95 here - more than triple the price, and you don't even get the cover disk every month! I subscribed to the magazine in England, and now get it much cheaper AND quicker.

The same thing applies to games - a £24.95 game in the UK showed up here months later for \$79.95. Where's your excuse for this one? The UK does, as you stated, have VAT (17.4%, not 18%). And Australia's is 20%? OK, when you order a game from the UK to be sent overseas, you automatically get 17.4% knocked off the RRP. So why do games here cost nearly triple as much?

James Wilson
Victor Harbor SA

Ed: You seem to have your maths a little confused, James. For a start, UK pounds and Australian dollars are not equivalent - in fact there are about 40 pence to the dollar. So your £3.95 magazine costs about \$9.90, directly converted, reducing the increase to around 40% rather than 300%. The loss of the coverdisk is certainly a pain, though. Since Australia doesn't have sales tax on software, the £24.95 game would cost about \$51.50 directly converted, making the increase about 55%. When you consider that shipping costs right around the world for small quantities are exorbitant, the change looks a lot less outrageous. Evidently Australia's much lower cost of living has you off balance - or maybe it's just the heat!

Coverdisk?

A number of letters have raised the issue of having some sort of disk accompanying the magazine. I agree with them, to an extent. I'm not interested in two level game demos, public domain utilities and castrated application demos, but I'd like to see an on-disk index issued annually, to make it easier to refer to articles without flipping through back issues. A run-time version of a database supplied annually on disk and fully indexed, including advertisers, for the preceding five years would be appreciated by people who use ACAR for reference. Don't you have something like that for your own use?

J H Roddick

Hoppers Crossing Vic

Ed: Here at the ACAR office we keep all the text from every ACAR on Syquest removable hard disk cartridges, which is much simpler than using any sort of paper. But your idea has definite merit, and we'll give it some thought. The work that would have to go into the disk would be considerable, though.

A1200 Compatibility Update

Thanks to Joshua Maley for this update to the A1200 compatibility list in the May edition. He also notes that the

original version of *Shadow of the Beast II* actually works with the A1200, with a few graphic glitches.

Games that run without problems:

Conquests of Camelot, Bard's Tale II, Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders, Lord of the Rings (Interplay), runs from hard disk *Adventures of Robin Hood, Myth, Obitus, Barbarian* (Psygnosis), *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom, Invadercraft* (slightly sped up).

Applications that work fine:

Kindwords 2.0, Fantavision, DPaint III and IV.

Games that run with restrictions:

Shadow of the Beast II (C), will also operate normally, *Indy - The Action Game* (C) (E) *The Faery Tale Adventure* (C), music doesn't work, *The Last Ninja III* (memory problems) (C), *Ninja Remix* (C) (E), *ESwat* (C) (E), *International Karate +*, shaky graphics *Strider* (C) (E), *Loom* (C) (E), disable hard drive, etc, *Indy - The Graphic Adventure* (C) (E), ditto above, *Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?* (C) (E), *Technocop* (C) (E), etc, *Deathtrap* (C) (E), etc, *Onslaught* (C) (E), *Stormlord* (C) (E), shaky graphics, *Ninja Mission* (C) (E).

Applications that run with restrictions:

XCopy III, ACAR Hints Disks, Intellitype, DPrint.

Games that won't run:

The Running Man, Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, Return of the Jedi, War In Middle Earth, Rick Dangerous (I & II), *Robocop, Impossible Mission II, Blasteroids, Live and Let Die, Kick Off, Turbo Out Run, Leaderboard Golf, Stunt Car Racer, Battleships, 3-D Pacman, Double Dragon, Rolling Thunder.*

(C) = Disable CPU-Cashes

(E) = Chips in ECS-Mode or just worse graphics, less/no sound.

Deluxe Paint AGA

by Graham Bowden

Sydney's WOC show was a bargain buyers bonanza again this year and those of you who were unable to attend have probably already been thoroughly depressed with tales of supercheap wares. Far be it from me to amplify your agony but I must say this, it would have taken a steel will to walk away from the show without having at least a small dent in the pocketbook.

A decent hard drive backup program (*Amiback + Tools*) and a Workbench 3.0 compatible wordprocessor (*ProWrite*) were on my agenda along with a hand scanner. The software found its way into my possession with a minimum of fuss but the scanner will have to await another show.

Oh dear! Steel wills turn to wet cardboard when confronted with an A1200 complete with 2 megs of chip RAM plus a - smallish - 40 meg hard drive at an asking price less than what was required for a trusty old half meg hard-drive-less A500 back in '89.

'Tis a pity though that the where-with-all didn't stretch to a multi-sync or expanded memory with FPU but at least some of *DPaint AGA*'s extended features can be explored.

What's new for *DPaint*

Time flew while I was having fun and in the interim quite a few improvements were visited upon *DPaint*. Version 4.1, which introduced a few enhancements, has been and gone since *Deluxe Paint* was last reviewed in these pages.

Now the AGA version has been released with a few more upgrades to further its appeal and complement the new chipsets. Unfortunately some of the shortcomings of the original *DPaint 4.0* have

carried through to the latest version. However, on the whole - and at least until the rumoured *Brilliance* arrives - *Deluxe Paint* remains a highly desirable and creative piece of software. So what have they done?

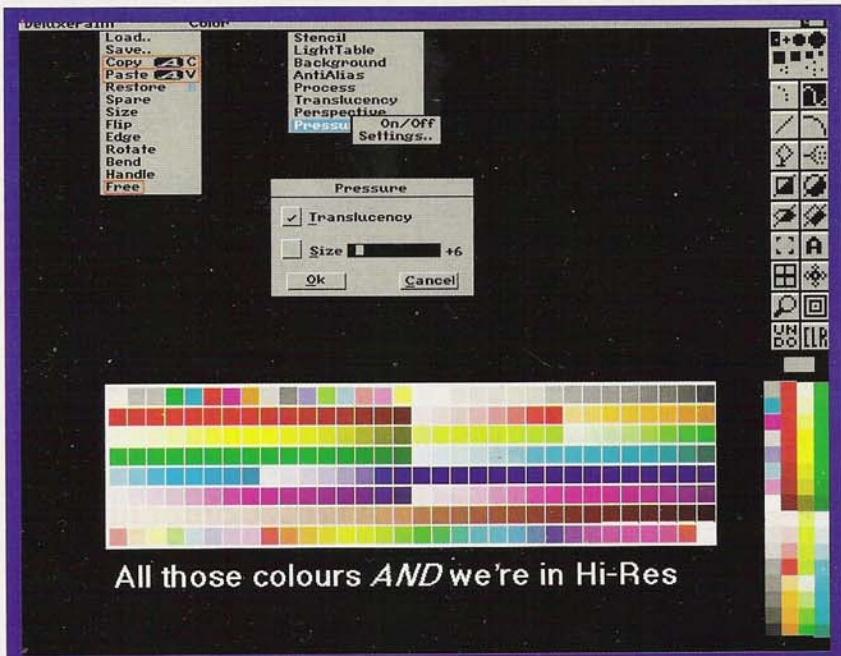
Deluxe Paint 4.1 brought extended colour selection to the Palette and Range requesters. Now a range of colours can be selected by simply picking the first colour then holding down the Alt key while choosing a second colour further along the palette.

When the mouse button is released watch *DPaint* pick up all the intervening shades. It's a nice touch. The palette markers every four colour spots make selecting a specific number of colours a little easier.

Problems

Not so nice are the continuing problems with colour cycling. Custom brushes still refuse to multi-cycle unless the "Rate" slider for the brush's colour range is moved above the default zero setting. If a palette colour has been placed more than once on the Range requester bar and that range is then used in a custom brush, expect the brush colours to be permanently and irreversibly changed after a Multi-cycle operation has been carried out.

And the old colour cycling bugbear remains. If colours are placed on the Range bar with intervening spaces then *DPaint* chooses its own colours from the palette to shade between those you used but when the Tab key is pressed to initiate cycling,



the colours selected by the program don't cycle. Perhaps at the next upgrade?

Clipboard Cut and Paste!

The Brush menu has a couple of interesting new items in the form of Copy and Paste selections. Custom brushes can be copied to the system clipboard and saved there for later use or transferred to another clipboard supporting program. It works like this.

Grab a custom brush and select Copy from the Brush menu or use the keyboard equivalent of right Amiga/c. Now grab another brush, in fact pick up as many subsequent brushes as you please. When the first brush is required again select Paste from the Brush menu or right Amiga/v from the keyboard and the original brush will be instantly restored.

Or how about this. With DPaint AGA running in the background boot up your graphics supporting word processor (ProWrite, Final Copy II etc). When a

picture is to be loaded into the document just pick it up as a brush from Deluxe Paint's screen, copy it onto the clipboard, step back into the word processor and select Paste. The brush will be pasted from the clipboard into the document.

You want to alter a picture that's already in a document? Simple. Cutting the offending graphic from the manuscript will cause it to be placed on the system clipboard. Now step into DPaint AGA and select Paste from the Brush menu.

Instantly the brush is imported into Deluxe Paint ready for any alterations required. Probably though the first alterations necessary will be to restore the brush's colours to their original glory. Word processors, you see, tend to distort the colours to suit their own palette. Be that as it may, this new cut and paste brush feature is a definite leap forward and don't forget, the IconEdit program in the Tools drawer is another clipboard user.

Also new to the Brush menu is a "Free" selection for standard custom brushes. Selecting Brush/Free will dump the brush and free up any memory that was being

used by it. Regular users will be aware that this ability has always been available for animbrushes.

Tablet support

The Effects menu has yet another exciting new feature upon which I can only theorize. It's the Pressure feature and is exclusively available to those fortunate enough to be blessed with a pressure sensitive Graphics Tablet. Would that one of my local Amiga hardware suppliers could find it in their heart to allow a test of one of these little beasties. There seems to be a dearth of dealers or wholesalers willing to allow comparison tests of any Amiga hardware in this country.

If anyone's listening and your place of business is in the Brisbane area, feel free to contact me post haste to arrange a test drive and write up within these pages. For now though I can only say that the Pressure feature allows either brush size or translucency - or both - to be varied on the fly with pen pressure changes on the tablet surface. What more can I say.

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DELUXE PAINT AGA

Workbench 2.x features

Deluxe Paint AGA now places an AppIcon on the Workbench whenever it's started. An Application Icon is a feature which arrived with Kickstart 2.0, and by making use of it, *Deluxe Paint*'s designers are helping to improve the lot of we multi-tasking Amigans.

In the past it was frustratingly necessary to have to "click" through several custom screens in order to find the one needed for a particular operation. It really isn't uncommon for me to have *Directory Opus*, Workbench, *Deluxe Paint* and *ProWrite* running simultaneously and it's frustrating to go clicking or "Right Amiga/m"ing through these several screens to find the one I want.

Since Kickstart 2.0 the custom screen of any program that places an AppIcon on the Workbench is instantly accessible. Just double click the icon. Projects - in this case pictures - can also be loaded by dragging their icon onto the *DPaintAGA*

AppIcon. What could be simpler?

Certainly not the opening screen mode and colour selection screen. Not that I'm complaining. It's become Amiga industry standard and now looks a lot like the Preferences Screenmode window. It has a daunting array of choices. There are no less than 18 screen modes, 6 screen sizes including Standard, four overscans plus Custom, 8 page sizes and anything from 2 to 256 colours to choose from as well as the new HAM-8. Beautiful, isn't it?

In all previous releases of *Deluxe Paint* on my old A500 I never found it necessary to use the Be Square item from the Prefs menu. I've even written a tutorial on the subject which, when it's published can be partly ignored.

That's because with the AGA release and on later Kickstart versions of the operating system, Be Square is of paramount importance. Because of the odd shaped pixels, circles and squares are not circular or square when operating on an interlaced Lo-Res or non-interlaced Hi-Res screen on later Amigas. Be Square however ad-

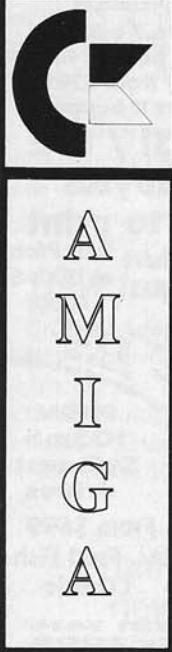
justs the shapes to make them round or square as they're being drawn. Now, with *DPaintAGA*, this feature also works on built in brushes so that all those brushes at the top of the toolbox can now be used undistorted.

Annoying changes

Not so the new requester windows. They've been distorted by transposing the "Cancel" and "OK" buttons at the bottom of windows. This conforms to industry standards once again, but power users, until they scale the learning curve, will find themselves inadvertently cancelling selections rather than locking them in.

That is until it becomes a habit to use the keyboard shortcuts which requesters now have. These shortcuts are represented in a style reminiscent of MS-DOS practice with underlined characters within the requester windows. The Fill Type requester for instance has fill type buttons printed as Line Shap Cir Cont and Hi with Ok and Cancel at the bottom of the requester.

If you feel lost, helpless and confused,
Just follow this signpost!



Call about incredible specials on **Deluxe Paint IV** and **Deluxe Paint AGA**!

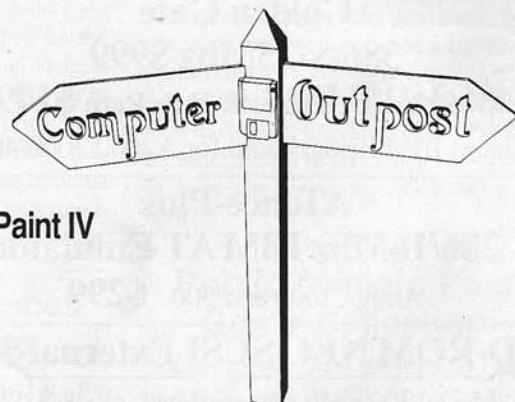
Brilliance now also in stock.
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Find you need a really useful piece of software to organise your day - Use "**Keep Track**"

Call for more info.

I hope that the Tupsoft Twins' first ride in a large plane was a much more lifting experience than lunch time by the window!

G'Day to my friend Daniel out at Cowra, Great hearing from you - stay in touch!



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Standardisation has visited the Quit function as well, with right Amiga/q now quitting rather than the old Shift/q. The text in pop-out menus has been shifted up just a little to enable the first pop-out menu item to be aligned with the mouse pointer rather than just below it.

To my mind it's questionable as to whether this saves time when selecting features. The palette requester now has a Scale button which simply remaps the colours used for the menu bar and toolbox if a loaded picture's palette cause them to be unreadable.

The *Deluxe Paint 4.1* release changed the operation of the "Alt/Right Amiga" key combination when animpainting. Previously this key combination would stamp a brush down and step to the following anim frame. Now the frame step no longer occurs. The Animpainting feature has not been lost however. Holding down the Alt key and stamping the brush down using the mouse will still step forward a frame.

New to *DPaintAGA* is the Clear Screen function in animation mode. A single

frame can be cleared by left button clicking the "CLR" icon in the Toolbox. Right button clicking will call up the Clear requester from which a range of frames may be selected.

So once again loads of enhancements have been added but there are still more things I'd like to see included.

What's missing?

Like bezier curves for instance with a user defined number of bending points. And how about animbrushes which can be "lassoed" rather than being stuck with the current rectangular selection. What about also allowing a user definable "Z" dimension (thickness) to custom brushes so that when they're rotated to 90 degrees they don't disappear.

Wrap fills that produce concave as well as the current convex shapes would also be nice along with the ability to be able to select wrapping in the vertical or horizontal planes only. It would be nice to be able to wrap a brush onto a gradient map

as well in the manner of *SpectraColor*. This would allow a custom brush to wrap down into darker colours and up over lighter shades. Then there's graduated blending, something at which *DigiPaint* excels. Graduated blending occurs when a brush is blended over a picture so that the brush colours are totally opaque in the centre of the brush (or user defined area) and gradually become transparent towards the edges. I'd like to be able to do this without changing programs.

And finally wouldn't it be nice to have some sort of basic picture manipulation within the program. *Personal Paint* has done it so let's see *DPaint* do it. A little edge detecting or embossing can add some striking effects to the artwork.

Apart from that Electronic Arts has done it again. *Deluxe Paint* continues to move onward and upward and still leads the pack as an affordable, painting software package. Go out and get your upgrade today.

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PC-Task

MS-Dos Emulation without Hardware

by Andrew Farrell

I regularly exchange graphics, word-processing documents, spreadsheet files and database information between the Amiga and PC. Indeed, many Amiga applications load and save files from popular MS-DOS programs without a hitch.

At the heart of the Amiga is the mighty Motorola 68000 series processor. A powerful beast by any measure, but it speaks a language most unlike the Intel CPU powering IBM compatibles. So although I can also move an MS-DOS program onto my machine, it will not run without an emulator.

Justifying the cost of a hardware based IBM emulators to solve this problem is difficult when a complete PC can be had for little more money.

PC-Task, an Australian produced software emulator, offers an acceptable alternative. At \$69, it enables you to happily run most well-behaved DOS software.

Now I should make it perfectly clear this may at times seem like wading through molasses in mid-winter. Emulators are, by nature of the demanding task they perform, slow.

As *PC-Task* runs an IBM program, it must convert each instruction to something the Motorola CPU in the Amiga can understand. Some clever lads who have already created fast and reliable

Apple Macintosh emulation promise to solve this problem.

They say by converting the IBM software to Amiga before the emulation commences, a dramatic increase in speed is attained. *Emplant*, a Macintosh emulator available now for the Amiga, will use this technique to run MS-DOS software in the future.

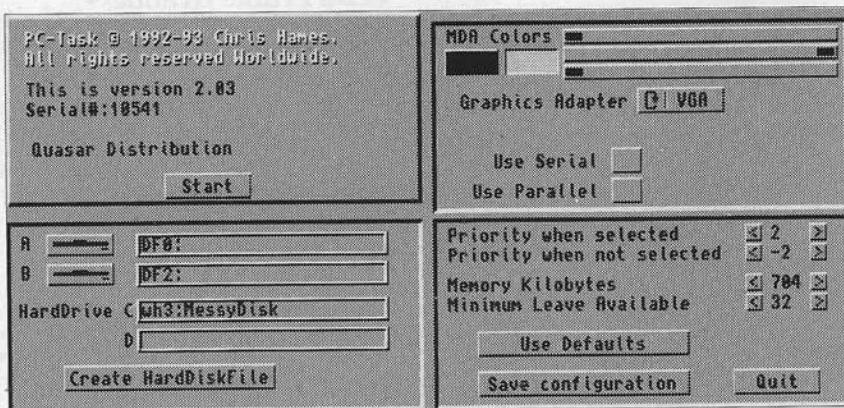
Using *PC-Task*, running the latest MS-DOS games is out of the question. *Windows* will definitely not work and the latest version of MS-DOS has problems. On my machine the speed is comparable to a fast IBM 286. DOS users will tell you this is acceptable for wordprocessing.

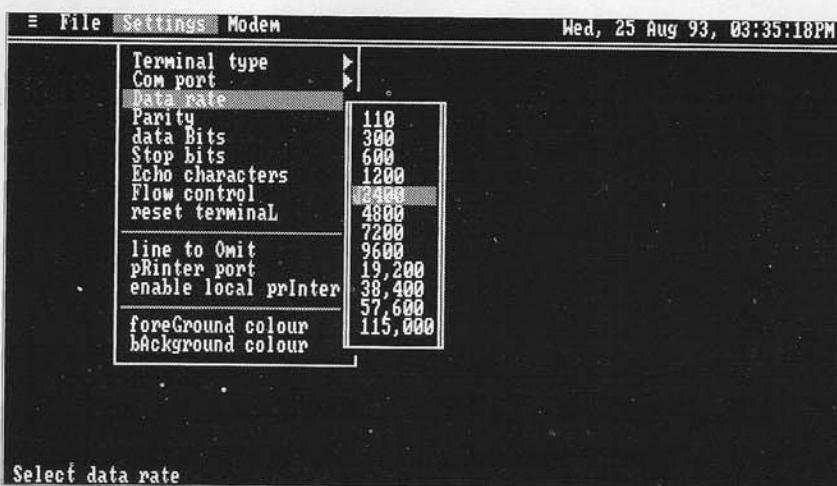
However the Amiga has no equivalent to the PC's text based video mode. So, despite the processing speed, text scrolling is slow. Amiga applications have no such trouble since they work more efficiently with the operating system to achieve fast text refreshing.

Up and running

PC-Task is easy to install. Drag the icon to wherever you want and you're ready to go. There's a special version for accelerated machines and additional utilities which run under MS-DOS. These are unpacked and placed on a 720K DOS disk automatically.

A single configuration screen allows you to adjust how *PC-Task* uses Amiga resources





Select data rate

PC-Task will happily run programs such as communications software which can take advantage of the Amiga's parallel or serial ports

The opening *PC-Task* screen provides control over memory allocation, selection of serial and parallel ports, colours, priority and creation of a virtual hard disk. The latest version supports MGA, CGA and VGA - with some VGA modes requiring the AGA chip-set to display 256 colours. You can use your Amiga mouse with PC software by activating the built-in mouse driver.

Disk options

With most PC software arriving on high-density disks these days, you'll probably want to seriously consider purchasing an appropriate floppy drive. Amiga 4000 and some 3000 owners will already have a drive capable of accessing these disks.

If you wish to use your hard disk with *PC-Task* there's the option of using a virtual hard drive or working with a dedicated partition. A virtual drive creates a file which must be FDISKed and formatted under MS-DOS. It's the slower but more flexible alternative. You can use a Bridgeboard virtual hard disk file if you've still got one kicking around.

By creating a special mountlist entry and taking advantage of the include hardfile.device, it's possible to access a *PC-Task* hard disk directly from AmigaDOS. This is ideal for transfer-

ring large files, although the setup procedure is not for beginners.

Conclusion

Despite its limitations, *PC-Task* has found a place on my Workbench. I fell in love with *IdeaFisher*, a knowledge database package not available on the Amiga. With *PC Task*, I can flick between *IdeaFisher* and other Amiga programs using my mouse.

Multitasking has its advantages too. My favourite Amiga pop up phone book opens on the MS-DOS screen and when *IdeaFisher* is busy doing a complex search, it's no trouble to bring an Amiga application screen to the front and continue working.

The documentation is well written, although some of the more technical areas leave some things open to experimentation. A compatibility list would be useful too.

With so much MS-DOS software to choose from, it makes sense to have *PC-Task* handy to help fill the gaps in your Amiga library. In terms of emulation performance, *PC-Task* does remarkably well especially considering it is entirely software based. For the money, there's no cheaper PC on the market.

More information is available from Quasar Distribution (03) 585 1074. □

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Ami-Back Tools

vs

QuarterBack Tools Deluxe

Daniel Rutter investigates recovery software

More and more Amiga users have hard drives. While the most common Amiga is still a plain A500, there are now hundreds of thousands of hard disk equipped machines.

When you've got a hard drive, you need to back it up and you need some way to recover data if you accidentally annihilate it. Some users don't own any such software; presumably they also prefer the invigorating smack of the windscreen on their face to the inconvenience of wearing a seat belt.

Backup software allows you to take the data on your hard drive and move it onto floppy disks, or faster media like removable hard disk cartridges or tape drives. If you back up regularly, even the most cataclysmic failure of the drive won't destroy invaluable data.

Recovery software, on the other hand, allows you to get data back without going to a backup. This is helpful because even the most diligent backup regime won't do more than one backup a day, and so it's still possible to lose a day's work if your hard drive kicks the bucket or, more often, you stuff something up yourself.

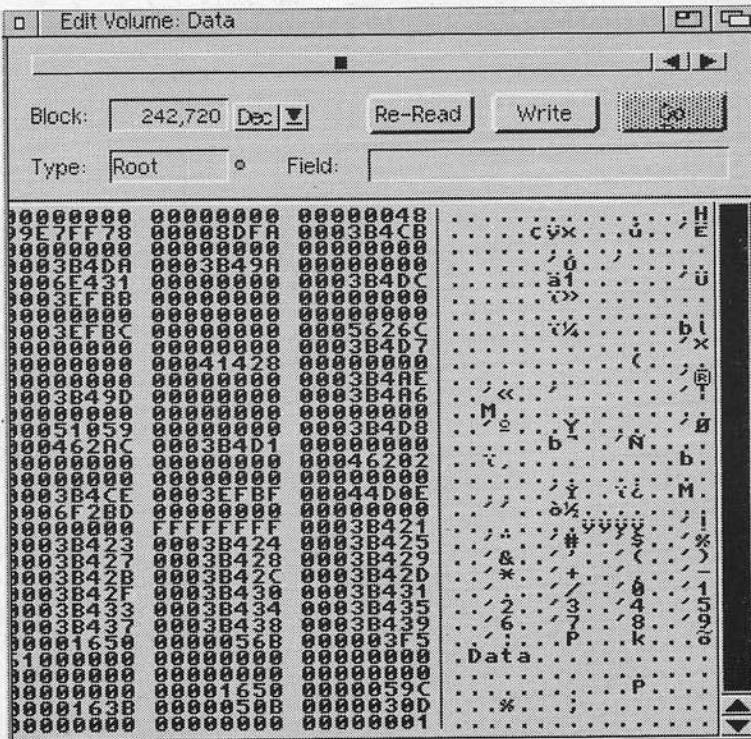
If, like most people, you're backing up to floppy, it's likely you back up a lot less often than daily, and so good recovery software is essential, for everything from simply undeleting files to rebuilding horrible errors caused by power cuts or foolish reboots during

write operations. Everybody who's used a computer for a while has felt that sudden, cold sliver of panic that comes as your eye spots the drive light flickering back on, but your nervous system works too slowly to stop the fateful three keys being depressed...

Recovery packages also typically in-

clude optimisation features. These take a hard drive which, over time and with many deletions and creations, has had its files spread in little bits all over the disk, and reunite all the lumps into continuous files. If your drive is running significantly slower than it did when new, and loading larger files seems to

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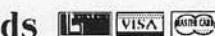
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DISASTER RECOVERY

need an awful lot of drive activity, it probably needs optimisation.

A while ago, the only way to go for Amiga hard disk backup and maintenance was *QuarterBack* and *QuarterBack Tools*. This was mainly because QB and QBT, as their next of kin knew them, were just about all there was. You could duplicate all of their features with other PD, ShareWare and commercial products, but nobody else had everything in one place.

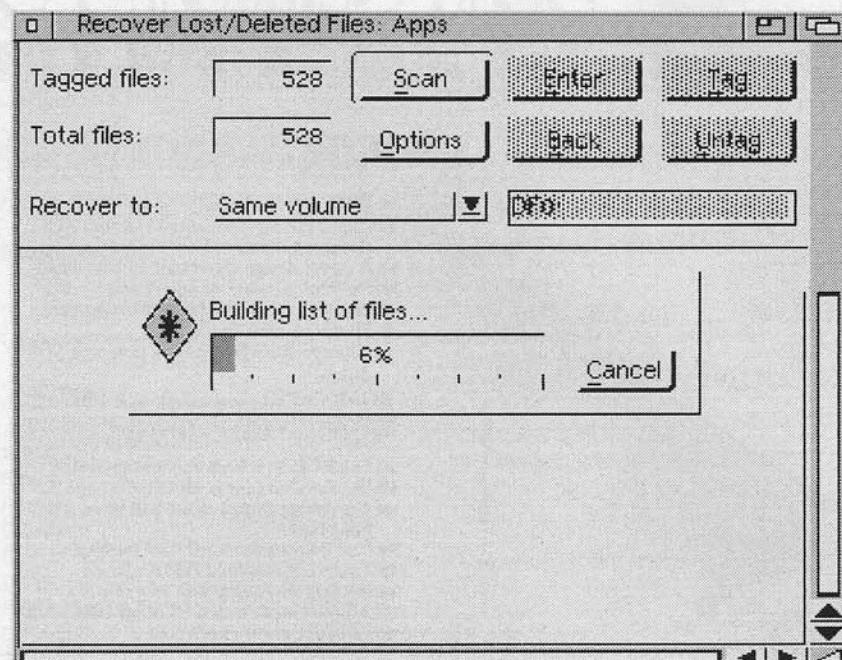
All this changed with the arrival of *Ami-Back*, reviewed a while ago now, and *Ami-Back Tools* (ABT from now on), which has also been out locally for a couple of months now. I've now used *ABTools* on a few dead drives, and am really pleased with its performance.

**"get data back
without going
to a backup"**

But it's not alone any more. *QuarterBack* has struck back with *Quarterback Tools Deluxe* (QBTD from now on), and suddenly nobody's clearly superior any more.

ABT beats the old QBT by miles in every department, but against QBTD it's even in most respects. Both programs have a nice interface instead of the clunky old WB1.x look of QBT. And both run acceptably quickly, against the legendary slowness of QBT, which could take more than three hours to scan a large (1GB) drive for lost files and then fail to find them, as opposed to ABT's 40 minutes and complete success.

Doing tests on file recovery is difficult. It's easy to stuff up a hard drive, but real errors are infinite in variety and, by definition, impossible to reproduce identically for different programs to have a shot at fixing. But we've now used both ABT and QBTD on several stuffed hard drives and they both outperform QBT without raising a sweat.



Recovering damaged files is easy with both Quarterback and Amiback

Note, though, that if your drive has suffered physical damage you've got all the hope of a chicken in a blast furnace - if your data is really valuable there are super-high tech firms that can try to recover it for you, but otherwise forget it.

QBTD comes out distinctly ahead in one respect, though. If you scan a fair sized drive with ABT, taking say 15 minutes, and end up with more files than you can fit on one device or simply change your mind about what you want to recover after starting the operation, you have to rescan the whole drive again. QBTD makes it simple to select more files from the list, which is a significant plus.

On the down side, QBTD consistently took about 10% longer to scan a device for lost files. Not a very big deal.

One thing to remember when using any file recovery or optimisation program is that using an external hard disk cache at the same time can be a bad idea. ABT includes its own configurable cache for disk operations (QBTD's disk manipulation is kept well away from the user's prying fingers), and extra cache memory can cause aggrieved mes-

sages from your hard disk controller device to pop up, which is bad for one's blood pressure.

For optimisation, QBTD noses ahead on power but not on speed.

ABT can't optimise files - the most useful sort of optimisation - unless there's free space on the disk big enough to fit the biggest file on the disk into. This is seldom a problem with hard drives unless they've got huge animations or similar monster files on them, but it makes ABT pretty useless for optimising floppies.

QBTD, on the other hand, can optimise a disk with virtually no free space at all. The trade off is speed; QBTD optimises every file in sight whether or not it needs it, ABT passes over unfragmented files that aren't in the way. Thus ABT's optimisation ends up around twice as fast, which could also have something to do with the 1MB internal cache I've set ABT up to use.

Where both programs will be used most often is for recovering dead files. Usually, it's just a file you deleted by accident - if you immediately run ABT or QBTD so nothing can have written over the file data, their undeletion func-

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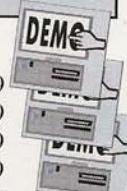
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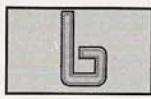
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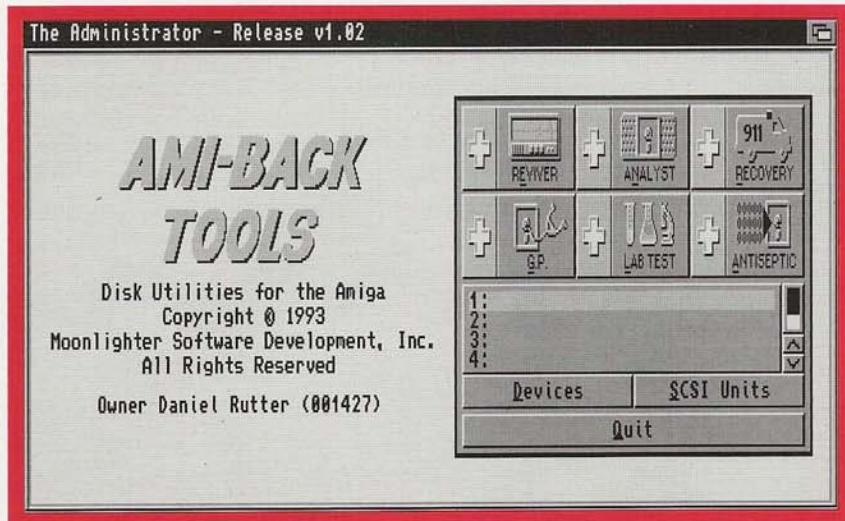
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DISASTER RECOVERY



Ami-Back Tools' main screen gives easy access to all functions

tions will give you your data back perfectly every time. Again, QBTD does it better, thanks to the ability to go back and change your mind, but aside from that there's nothing between them.

File undeletion and recovery fixes one way your hard drive can stuff up; the other way is when the file system has, as our august editor is prone to say, a banana and refuses to allow disk writes, or reads, or both. Unvalidated drives aren't nearly as much of a problem with WB2 and higher as they used to be - one of WB2's major selling points is its ability to automatically revalidate drives - but more stubborn problems need sterner measures. Both programs will fix this; once again QBT is a tad slower. In this department there doesn't seem much to pick between them; both allow automatic or user selected repairs, both produce a log of actions.

Ancillary features

Both programs come with ancillary features; all but one of QBTD's are separate programs, ABT's are built in. ABT comes with Lab Test, which builds a database of CRC files for your disk. A CRC is a number figured out from a file's contents, which is unique to each file and won't be the same if the file is changed. So if you've got a CRC database for a given disk, you can tell which

files have been changed - a prime indicator of virus activity, for a start.

ABT's last feature is the Antiseptic, a simple program to overwrite hard and floppy disks with blank space, so nobody can undelete that file that proved you shot JFK. It'll blank whole disks or just the empty space on the disk, and is definitely one for the paranoid and otherwise shifty-eyed - but I suppose it's nice to know it's there.

QBTD comes with a disk eraser, too, another one which just erases files. It has a disk editor built in, which is really only for the serious experts but does let

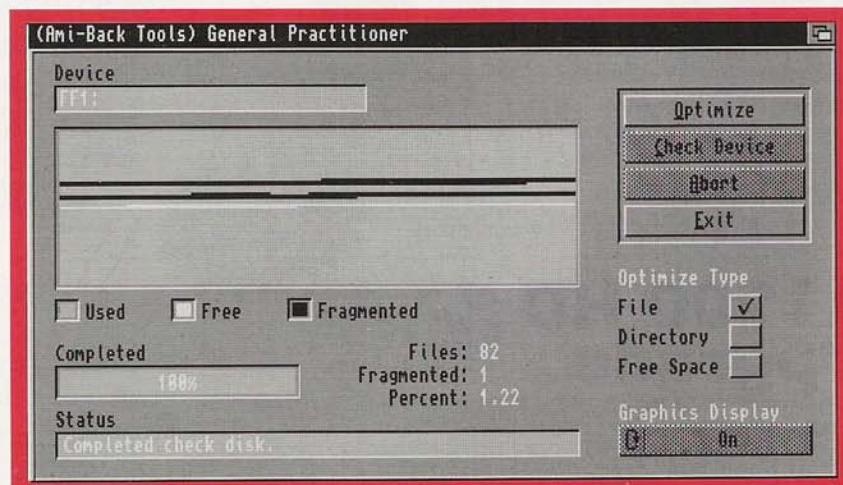
you muck about with things on the disk at the lowest level there is. The external Encryptor program lets you use a password of your own devising to make a file illegible and reconstruct it later - another one for people with Don Luigi's mailing list on their machines. The Key-stroke Finder lets you hunt the exact key combination needed for that outlandish ASCII character without playing the keyboard like a piano, and the Locator is a pretty good file finding program, though I've seen faster.

If that wasn't enough, QBTD also comes with a disk copying program and also Brain Cloud, which renders a floppy disk illegible to AmigaDOS. It's very easy to get around the clouding, but it'd stymie an amateur.

The last QBTD bonus program is SYstem Mover, which makes it easy to move some or all system files from one device to another without painful CLI manipulation.

Overall, and taking into account the bonuses, QBTD at \$149 is a better deal than ABT by itself for \$80 or so. On the other hand, you can get ABT with the Ami-Back backup program for about \$130, at which price the pair is certainly better value than QBT. There really isn't enough between them to draw a clear distinction. QBTD is available from Amadeus Computers (02) 652 2712. Ami-Back and Tools are available from Tupsoft (02) 482 7040. □

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Personal Paint

by Andrew Farrell

So you've got yourself a shiny new A1200 and the next item on the must have list is a paint program. At \$249 some would argue Deluxe Paint AGA is a little expensive, especially if you're not after the fancy animation capabilities. Well, there's now an affordable alternative.

Personal Paint is very similar to Deluxe Paint, without the animation features. However, in many areas, there are some worthwhile improvements. Best of all, Personal Paint supports AGA (except HAM modes), all for around \$100. Apart from the slightly quirky manual, it's a great package worth checking out.

Up and running

Installation of the two disks is directed by a simple script, which offers you the choice of installing each part of

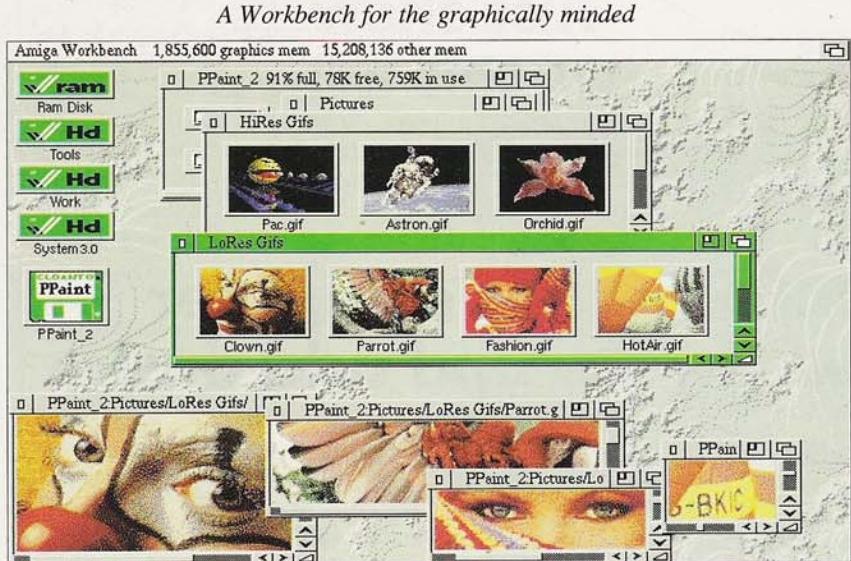


the package. Handy if you're tight on disk space, or want to add parts later on. However, it's a shame they didn't use the Commodore installer which is a more elegant method by any measure.

Personal Paint will run on a basic Amiga, however extra Chip RAM is recommended especially if you want to work in high-resolutions with more colours. The manual made some mention of audio feed-back. At first I thought this might be some helpful spoken confirmation of tool selections, along the lines of *Term 3.3*. Alas, Personal Paint's audio feedback would rank equally with the standard sound from an IBM PC - we're talking pips, squeaks and the odd beep. Someone ought to remind them the program is running on an Amiga.

Interface

A conversation between the designers of this program may have gone like this: "Hey, let's move the tool bar to the



left hand side of the screen! They'll never pick that it looks like *Deluxe Paint*." Thankfully it was then followed by: "... and maybe we can add some really great functions."

Yes folks, the interface is so much like *Deluxe Paint*, if you already know *Deluxe Paint* you almost know *Personal Paint*. Even the hot keys are the same for most functions and the right button activates similar option windows from most of the paint tools. But there's some neat additions worth mentioning too.

Gradient fills

Getting smooth colour transitions is usually tricky without a good range to choose from. In 256 colour mode, it's not a drama. In 16 colours, *Personal Paint* has some impressive dithering methods which can be used to create gradient fills, or improve the look of imported images. Dithering two colours creates the illusion of in between shades.

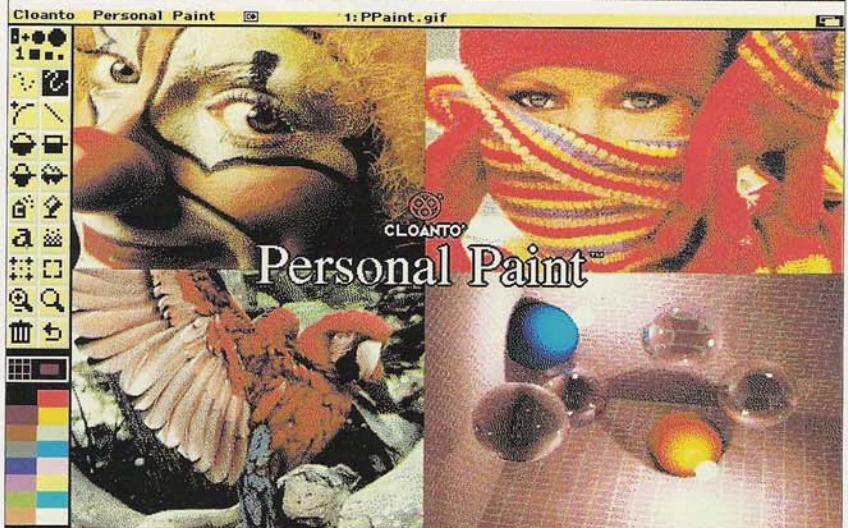
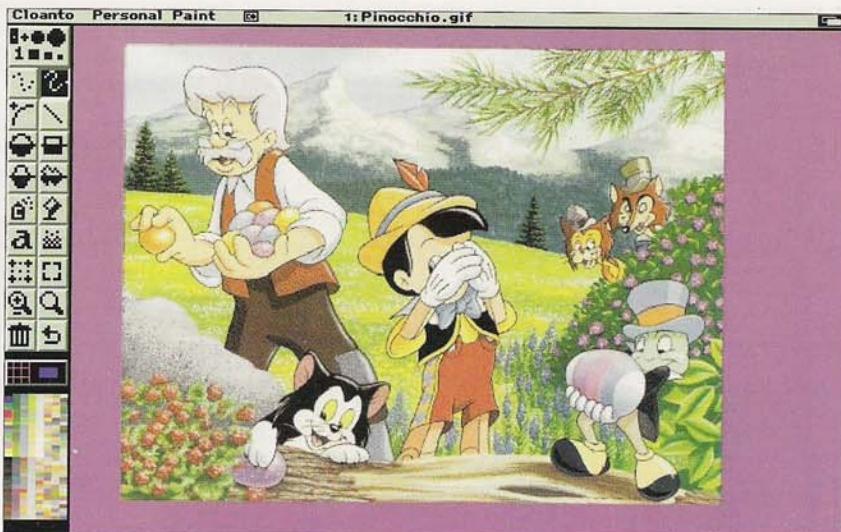
This is achieved by special patterns which place pixels of a similar colours side by side to trick the eye into seeing something in between. The pattern used can dramatically affect the look of the image. *Personal Paint* performs well in this department.

Image processing

Personal Paint starts giving *Deluxe Paint* a serious run for its money in this department. Although lacking some of the brush paint modes, *Personal Paint* offers a smart collection of image processes, with the added bonus of being able to create new or edit existing effects.

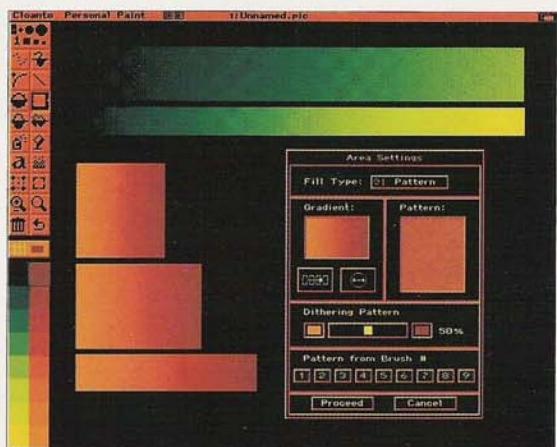
However, the old "slower than a wet week of Sundays" comes to mind shortly followed by my current favourite, "worse than wading through a field of molasses in mid-winter" when describing the speed of *Personal Paint*'s image processing.

Powerful it may be, but fast the image processing ain't. Fortunately, you can very selectively apply each effect using either a freehand or square selection tool. An example of what's possible is included elsewhere on this page.



Colour merge makes compositing images a breeze

PERSONAL PAINT



An excellent fill requester, with a good gradient control



The palette requester is clean and simple, but lacking some of Deluxe Paint's power features

File formats

Personal Paint is no fuss-pot when it comes to loading foreign file formats. It can load and save PCX, GIF, IFF-ILBM and save to C. Pretty nifty, especially if you're dealing with PC heads, or sourcing images from a PC CD-ROM. The file requester is adequate. There's also a useful grab screen facility, useful for people like ... us!

Text

Creating video titles is a popular use for paint programs. Unfortunately, without animation there's no opportunity to move your fancy looking titles. However, *Personal Paint*'s ability to enhance text is up there with the best. Adding an

outline, drop shadow, 3D look and various other enhancements is simple thanks to a number of handy brush effects. The manual covers this application well.

Colour fonts are supported, as are Workbench 2.0's outline fonts - complete with full implementation of the aspect ratio environment variable - which is high time.

Brush selection

Once again, there's a *Deluxe Paint* look-alike winner at the top of the tool bar from which you choose your brush. An added feature is a hidden gadget labelled "1". Click here and you can select from nine possible brushes in memory. This makes working with mul-

tiple brushes a snap. Resizing, rotating the brush and moving the brush handle is also possible.

Conclusion

Overall, *Personal Paint* is a solid work horse, which is excellent value for money. There's lots of surprises, and despite a couple of let downs, *Personal Paint* has a great future as the most affordable entry level paint program on the Amiga. The added bonus is, the program has enough power to keep most artists busy for a long time without feeling the feature pinch.

Thanks to Amadeus Computers (02) 652 2712 for our review copy. RRP \$109. □

An impressive range of effects are possible using the Image Processing operator



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HOT PD

Daniel Rutter makes exciting discoveries

620 megabytes of stuff. Mounds of it. Utilities, games, text, music, pictures. Right there in front of me. I was looking at the AmiNet CD-ROM, and I was impressed. Sure, it's a pretty sad thing to get excited over, but I admit I did.

CD-ROM storage lets you get the thick end of a gigabyte of data into your computer for fifty bucks a disc, and the players are getting cheaper - all the big IBM and Mac software houses are getting into CD-ROM in such a big way that a whole heap of applications aren't even going to be released on floppy. One major Amiga luminary is also giving the idea consideration - see the end of this column.

The AmiNet CD-ROM is like having a bulletin board on your desktop - only you can grab the files at speeds approaching hard disk, instead of slower than floppy.

Its contents are mainly archived, and include the entire ab20.larc.nasa.gov amiga archive, which was a huge repository of Amiga stuff before it shut down in April 1992 and includes whole font collections and mounds of other groovy stuff.

The AmiNet disc also contains a whole heap of more recent software getting well into 1993; a load of brilliant and not so brilliant sound samples, plenty of really good MODs and a lot of lousy ones; mounds of pictures, many of them JPEG 24 bit images; all those weird UNIX ported utilities that you can never find when (or if) you need them; the list goes on.

The AmiNet disc is pretty badly compiled, with more than a few duplications and not the friendliest documentation, but if you can use a BBS then you

can find your way around it - and it's certainly far, far simpler than scouting around BBSs and PD libraries.

++ MagicWB

The other Pleasant Discovery over the last month has been the *MagicWB* suite. There are lots of nifty icon collections out there - the ones on Fish 546 by Kenneth Jennings are still quite good - but until now nobody's made a collection of icons for every standard Workbench program that installs itself and doesn't stomp the rest of your system when it does. Add to that a load of nice background colours, and you've got *MagicWB*.

The *MagicWB* package is a \$US20

Complexity of program indicated by number of +s before name.
Scale:

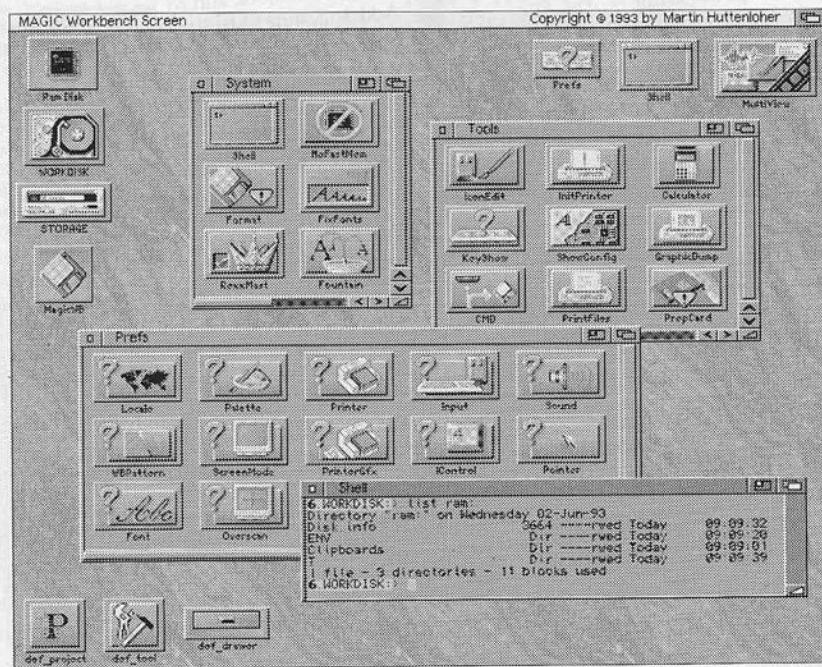
- + Embarrassingly simple
- ++ If you've read the Amiga manual you're right
- +++ If you've read and COMPLETELY UNDERSTOOD the manual
- ++++ Only if you can identify motherboards at a hundred paces

Programs included on companion disks indicated with HOT before name.

shareware collection created by Martin Huttonloher, and it uses an eight colour screen instead of the grindingly slow 16 colour needed for many funky icons. The icons are dithered to look as if they've got more colours than they really have, and many are dual image - they have a second image when clicked. *MagicWB* even has a nice icon for unreadable disks, by using an undocumented system feature!

That's the good news. The bad news is that *MagicWB* needs a flicker free machine - so either an older machine with a flicker fixer or an AGA model,

Magic WB



with of course a monitor capable of displaying flicker free modes. It also requires at least WB2. And it's another of these packages which don't let you make money from their distribution, so you'll never find it in a for-profit PD library. Check out the user groups and bulletin boards - it's really worth it!

HOT ++ BootX Patch

Last month I mentioned that pending the arrival of the first version of the excellent *BootX* virus killer by its new authors in Safe Hex International, there's been a patch version released by the original author to remove those annoying "your version is too old" messages. It's on the companion disks for this column, and as before you need WB2 or higher to run it.

HOT +++ F***Check & NoF***

A couple of months ago I mentioned this trojan horse program, which I swear the authors named specifically to make it hard to talk about it. It hides in a program called *ModemChecker*, 15516 bytes long, which reports everything to be fine with your modem even if you don't have one plugged in. While it chats with you about your nonexistent communications hardware, it quietly modifies the LoadWB command so that at some point in later life your computer will format one of its disk devices at random, writing the predictable four letter word all over it.

There are now two programs to check for the F*** virus, and they're both on the companion disk. If you're running a version of WB before 2 you're safe anyway, but if you're not it doesn't hurt to have one of these looking out for you.

HOT ++ Virus Checker 6.29

Pending the update to *BootX*, John Veldthuis' *Virus Checker* is the best all round virus checking package around, and certainly simpler to use than *BootX*.

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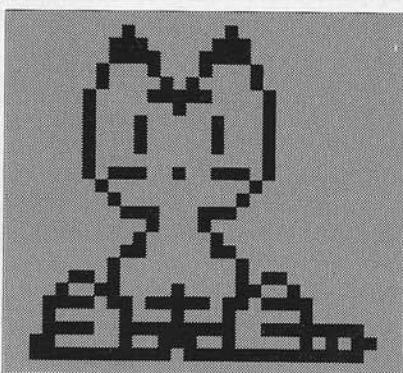
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looks like ever being. The latest version adds a couple more viruses, as usual, but also support for Safe Hex International's bootblock library, giving a standard for virus updates. *Virus Checker* is simple, reliable and powerful, and should always be running on any system that sees foreign disks fairly often - like mine, for example.

HOT ++ DiskSalv2

DiskSalv is one of the ancients of the Amiga world, going back to the days when Commodore seriously thought *DiskDoctor* was a good idea. *DiskSalv* allowed you to grab data from a damaged disk to another, clean one, rather than trying to write it back to the original disk. It was a huge success, and now it's been kicked into the 90s by this new version.

For a meagre \$US10 shareware fee, *DiskSalv 2* offers reliable data recovery



Ameko

at a dang good price if I do say so myself. Deleted and damaged files can be recovered to and from just about any device - as long as you've got WB2 or higher. You can still use *DiskSalv* from the command line if you like, but there's now a friendly gadget interface too for those who prefer quadruple amputation to CLI use. Definitely one to own.

HOT + Cow Wars

Light relief time. This game is Really Stupid, even by my standards. You play two little - well, catapults, I guess - on either side of a mountain, lobbing cows at each other. There are three weights of cow and a giant penguin that grabs your cows if you're not careful. Hit the other guy with one of each type of cow and you win. Unlike many Artillery type games, *Cow Wars* is in real time - you don't take turns to lob. It's pretty fatuous, but good for a giggle.

++++ Core Wars

Similar name, far greater brain involvement. I found this on the AmiNet CD ROM mentioned above, and redcode aficionados will probably buy the disk just for it. In *Core Wars*, people with very little to occupy their days write programs which duel for control of a simulated computer, and it has wasted more expensive computer time than *Life*, another computerised diversion for the pocket protector set.

Core Wars is an oddity, but if you want it you now know where to get it. I'd probably get hate mail if I put it on the companion disks, even if it'd fit.

HOT + Ameko

More frivolity. *Ameko* is an Amiga port of the Windows toy *Neko*, and it opens a window containing a small kitten, which chases the mouse pointer. If you move the pointer out of the window, the kitten scratches hopefully at the window edge, and if you leave the pointer in one place the kitten goes to sleep. Heck, it's more imaginative than those programs that make a pair of eyes track the pointer. *Ameko* requires WB2, and comes with versions for people with and without flicker free displays.

HOT ++ Mostra 2

Sebastiano Vigna has produced some very good stuff over the years, and

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Mostra is one of his best. It's a picture display, with all the bits you need and none of the pointless bells and whistles with which some programmers bulk up their offerings ("Swiss Army Displayer!").

Mostra 2 is WB2+ only, and has been completely rewritten for complete AGA compatibility. A couple of bugs have been fixed, like the annoying habit older versions had of resetting the left margin when you displayed odd width pictures.

There's a nice file requester so you don't have to run it from the command line, and it retains its funkiest feature - real-time decrunching of big pictures. This lets you display pictures you don't really have enough chip RAM to see all of at once, by only keeping one screenful in chip RAM at any given time and quickly decrunching the other bits when you scroll to them. *Mostra 2* is shareware and costs \$US20 to register.

HOT ++ SuperDuper 3

Another program from Sebastiano Vigna, and another large improvement. *SuperDuper* is a fast, flexible and free disk copier and formatter, which multitasks very well so you don't have to paralyse your machine while copying floppies. The current version has, again, been completely rewritten, and sports a more streamlined interface with all the giblets in a secondary window to cut down clutter.

SuperDuper still does copies to multiple devices, auto start (stick in the disks and off it goes) and copies from RAM buffers, but has now added support for external XPK compression libraries to cut RAM buffer size and, a major improvement from my point of view, support for weird disk devices.

You see, I compile the companion disks for this column, among other things, with *FMSDisk*, a program which makes fake floppies on my hard drive to allow me to build the disks much faster. Unfortunately, up until now nothing but the Commodore *DiskCopy* program would copy these fake disks onto real floppies. The same problem arose if I tried copying from a recoverable RAM drive. *SuperDuper* will now copy any devices of the same size onto each

other, to which I say huzzah.

So I'm easily pleased. So sue me. *SuperDuper* also supports high density floppies, though on my lousy machine I couldn't verify this. I'll trust the manual on this one.

Sorry there aren't more programs on the companion disks this time, but Sebastiano Vigna specified that all files had to be distributed for the *SuperDuper* and *Mostra* packages, and since he included the docs for each in three different formats, two of which are quite illegible for 95% of users, the size blew out a bit. C'est la vie.

The companion disks for this column are called HotPD11a and b, and are available for \$9.50 the pair from Prime Artifax.

Fish update

Next month we'll be back into the Fish disks again, which continue to multiply like dust bunnies under the couch. Fred has, in fact, floated the idea of releasing Fish on CD-ROM. As he says:

"The current cost of a floppy based subscription averages \$40/month. Depending upon quantity, the cost to subscribers for a CD-ROM distribution on a monthly basis could be \$20-\$30, with vastly increased limits on the amount of new material that could be distributed. With CD-ROM distributions I could easily include material that I now have to reject because of size considerations."

"The material could be organized in a more natural manner, along subject

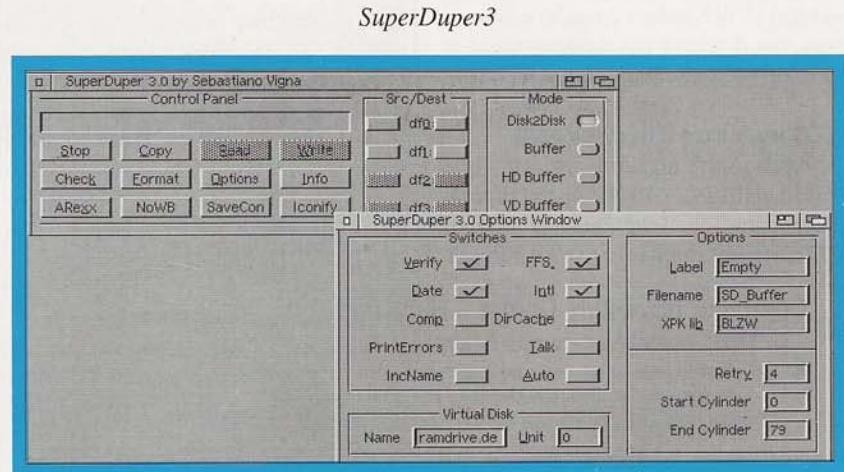
lines, like separate directories for demos, games, utilities, animations, etc. There would also be no need to pack any of the material, it could be distributed "ready to run", regardless of size (assuming no 300Mb animations of course).

"The way I envision a CD-ROM distribution channel working is that each monthly CD-ROM release would contain some fraction of older material that has appeared on a previous monthly CD-ROM, along with the current month's new material. As space is needed for new material, the older material would be deleted, on a first in - first out basis.

"Thus there would be a significant overlap in the contents of each successive disk, with the amount of overlap depending upon the quantity of new material appearing on each CD-ROM. Subscribers could elect to receive a new CD-ROM every month, every two months, every three months - according to their needs, and probably not miss any material as long as the interval doesn't extend past 5-6 months, assuming up to 100Mb of new material every month."

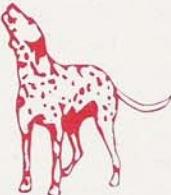
Fred then gives a questionnaire for user feedback about the CD-ROM, and the document is included in full on the companion disks. CD-ROM is certainly the way of the future - now we just have to figure out something to do with the redundant CDs. You can't make fruit bowls out of 'em.

Till next month!



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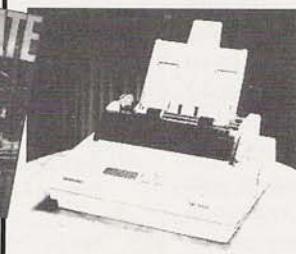
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Blitz 'em

by Roy Hurley



Adding commands to Blitz Basic

How many of you bought Blitz II at the World of Commodore Show in Sydney early in July? This release by the New Zealand based Acid has put Blitz Basic up there with the big boys, Amos and CanDo.

To its credit, Acid have so far supported Blitz well with speedy upgrades and a bi-monthly magazine. With an integrated editor and compiler to make life just that little bit easier, Blitz is a great language. Have you ever been frustrated by a missing command in your Basic? Ever wanted to add an extra command to do something not covered in the command set? Blitz's system friendly environment makes it easy.

The secret is to write Functions or Statements to do the work for you. These Functions can contain independent variables so that they won't interfere with the rest of your programs, and can be INCLUDED at the start of your program so they won't take up space in your program listing.

I have created a subdirectory in which all my home-made commands live, and use the INCDIR command to point the Blitz compiler in there, like this:

```
INCDIR "Dh0:Blitz/includes/"
INCLUDE EXISTS
```

Here are some of my extra commands, dealing with Dos and files. A good book on machine language or the System Programmer's Guide contains

some of the information you need to access the internals of the operating system.

Command: EXISTS {filename\$}
Result: Returns -1 if file could be found, 0 if it could not
Example: If EXISTS {"Ram:Picture.iff"} then NPrint "Picture in Ram!"

```
Function EXISTS {f$}
key.l=Lock_(&f$,-2)
If key>0
  UnLock_key
  Function Return -1
Else
  Function Return 0
End If
End Function
```

Description:

EXISTS {f\$} calls the Dos function Lock(filename,mode) to try and put a lock on the file. This function returns a zero if it could not lock onto the file, otherwise it returns an AmigaDos lock, which means the file exists.

It's important to call the Dos function UnLock(lock) to free the file so that other programs or subroutines can use the file after we have finished with it.

Command: FSIZE {filename\$}
Result: Returns the filesize of filename\$ or -1 if the file was not found, -2 if another error occurred.
Example: NPrint "Size of file is ",FSIZE {"Ram:Picture.iff"}

```
Function.l FSIZE {f$}
mem.l=AllocMem_(260,1)
If mem>0
  key.l=Lock_(&f$,-2)
  If key>0
    Examine_key,mem
    result.l=Peek.l(mem+124)
    UnLock_key
  Else
    result=-1
  End If
  FreeMem_mem,260
Else
  result=-2
End If

Function Return result
End Function
```

Description:

First we call the Exec Function AllocMem(MemSize,MemType) to allocate a block of 260 bytes of Public Ram. This function returns the address of our block of memory, or in the unlikely event that the system could not find any spare memory, a zero.

We need this 260 byte memory block so that we can call Lock the file and call the Dos function Examine(Key,InfoBlock) to fill it up with information on our file. This data structure is called a file InfoBlock.

Some interesting information can be read from the following offsets within the InfoBlock:

Offset	Type	Description
8	string	Filename Filenam\$=Peek\$(mem+8)
124	Length	long length.l=Peek.l(mem+124)
144	comment	comment\$=Peek\$(mem+144)

Once Examine has been called, the file length is read, and the function "goes out backwards", unlocking and freeing the memory used. Notice how the function checks for errors, and sets the variable result to return either an error message or the file length.

Command: BLOAD {filename\$}
Result: Loads a file into memory, and returns the memory address of its location. Also returns optional shared variable FLENGTH reporting the length of the file loaded Returns zero if an error occurred during loading.

Example: address.l=BLOAD {"Ram:Picture.iff"}

```
Function BLOAD {f$}
;SHARED FLENGTH ; If you want this extra
information!
```

```

key.l=Lock_(&f$,2)
If key>0
  mem.l=AllocMem_(260,1)
  If mem>0
    Examine_key,mem
    FLENGTH.l=Peek.l(mem+124)
    FADDRESS.l=AllocMem_(FLENGTH,1)
    If FADDRESS>0
      hand.l=Open_(&f$,1005)
      If hand>0
        bytes.l=Read_(hand,FADDRESS,
        FLENGTH)
        If bytes=FLENGTH
          BLOADED_OK.l=FADDRESS
        Else
          FreeMem_FADDRESS,FLENGTH
        End If
        Close_hand
      Else
        FreeMem_FADDRESS,FLENGTH
      End If
    End If
    FreeMem_mem,260
  End If
  UnLock_key
End If
Function Return BLOADED_OK
End Function

```

Description:

This function loads a complete file into memory, which can make things a lot quicker than working on a file stored on floppy disk. We start by locking the file, allocating a File InfoBlock, and calling Examine to fill it up, as described previously.

Once we know the length of the file, we attempt to allocate enough memory to hold its contents. Then we call the Dos Open(filename,Mode) to open the file before calling Read(handle,buffer,length) which reads the file into our memory block. Then we close the file and exit, freeing memory as required.

It's important to remember the address and length of the memory block so we can return it to the system with a call to FreeMem_FADDRESS,FLENGTH after we have finished using it.

Next month we will be looking at calling requesters from the Reqtools library, and we will be using some more machine language routines. If you have any questions, problems, suggestions, please write to me! Or, I can be contacted via Powerhouse BBS (042) 616 380 GT Net 302/017. □

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For Beginners Andy's Attic

Inside Your Workbench Tools Drawer and Spot Mail Reader

With winter upon us, threatening to chill finger tips to the point where they feel as though they're about to snap, you have excellent reason to retreat to the nearest fireplace and relax. Make a nice warm cuppa of your favourite brew, sit back and take a few minutes break to enjoy this month's Andy's Attic column.

In this month's column you'll find a note of appreciation to a generous reader, with a look at some of the goodies from the TOOLS drawer with our Workbench 2 upgrade.

Modem users that are into mail networking or those looking to get into it should find the short review of SPOT in this issue to be quite exciting. On with the show.

With many thanks

Regular readers of Andy's Attic will recall my short sob story a few issues back about my A590 hard drive which bit the dust after more than two years of faithful service.

As a result of those few paragraphs, Mr Alan Cowan, a retired Queensland reader of Andy's Attic, decided he would come to the rescue. Alan logged onto my BBS and left a note saying that

he had replaced the 20meg HD in his own A590 with a 105meg SCSI drive and generously donated his removed 20meg drive to Andy's Attic in appreciation of the benefits he'd received from reading the column.

I'd like to give a public thanks to Alan for his incredible generosity and also to those that wrote in and offered help in one way or another by suggesting places I might be able to get my drive repaired at a cheaper price than at regular ComCare agents.

It gives this humble writer a warm feeling inside to know the effort I put into these columns is appreciated to that extent and certainly makes it all the more worthwhile and satisfying.

So thanks Alan! Australia Post got it right fortunately and the hard drive arrived safe and sound. The A590 is back on its feet once again and working brilliantly. My hope is that you continue to find value in what's written in these pages in future issues.

The Tools Drawer

Amiga public domain software is usually of such a high quality that one can often end up forgetting what comes with the Amiga operating system. I re-

cently went scrounging around through PD lists, looking for a utility which would show me the ALT-Key combination I needed to create the small symbols like the (C) one sees in various doc files. In the middle of my search I stumbled across *KeyShow* in the Tools directory of my WorkBench disk.

Keyshow

A simple utility which will display all keys on whichever keymap you have loaded on the Amiga at time of starting. By pressing SHIFT, CTRL, AMIGA or ALT keys, *KeyShow* will display the results. Great for finding out which keys to press for those weird little symbols you see occasionally or to help get used to a foreign keymap when writing in another language. Start it from WB or a Shell. You'll find *KeyShow* in the tools drawer on your Extras disk if still using a floppy only system. In there, you'll also find:

Showconfig

A quick and easy way to view your system hardware configuration. *Showconfig* reports on CHIP types, CPU version, Hard drive controllers and memory expansion boards. It also confirms which Kickstart and disk versions of the operating system you're currently using. Handy when trouble shooting.

MEMacs

Looking for a powerful yet reasonably user friendly text editor to do your programming in? Look no further. *MicroEMacs* (*MEMacs* for short) won't impress you if you are looking for bells and whistles, but if what you want is a no nonsense and fast text editing machine, *MEMacs* may well fit the bill.

Originally taken from the public domain, *MEMacs* has been developed into a powerful text workhorse which will also allow you to input those funny little characters we were speaking of before which some editors and certainly most word processors will not allow.

Fire up *MEMacs* and press ALT-E in it to see what I mean. You should end

up with a tiny C in a box on screen. Use the *KeyShow* utility to see what other symbols are available to you with the keymap which you are using.

To get the full benefit out of *MEmacs*, one really needs to be using it fairly extensively. While all of its options and commands are available to you from the pull down menus, by using the keyboard equivalents of those commands, much time can be saved. We'll look at using *MEmacs* more extensively in a future issue.

HDbackup

WorkBench 2.0 comes with its very own HDbackup software and rightly so. Enough emphasis cannot be put on how important it is to back up important data on a hard or floppy disk. Using *HDbackup* on floppy disks is overkill as it's just as easy and quicker to simply mirror the important disk with *DiskCopy*. It can be used for that purpose nevertheless.

While considerably slower and lacking many of the bells and whistles associated with other commercially available hard disk backup software, *HDbackup* still does an impressive and competent job of backing up your important files. It also allows you to compress your files as you're backing up if you want to save some space.

You can also do partial and incremental backups. Providing you opted to make a log of your backups, *HDbackup* will also allow you to restore single files if you accidentally deleted just a single important file from your system.

As mentioned earlier, it may not be the bees-knees of hard disk backup software available for the Amiga, but it certainly beats the pants off copying files one by one from hard disk to floppy in an effort to safeguard their loss. Great to tide you over till you can afford the purchase of something better and faster.

SPOT - new pointing software

When I pointed (no pun intended) at *Foozle* by Peer Hasselmeyeras as an ideal choice for BBS network pointing

software late last year, at the time, it was the easiest of the bunch for the beginner to get up and running. That may have been true then, but not now.

Hot off the press comes *SPOT* by Nico Francois. *SPOT* just hit the Amiga communications arena with many of the same powerful features as *Foozle*, yet simpler to set up. I think it's a definite winner. Available to WB2.0 or higher users only, some of the features that *SPOT* boasts include:

- Supports WB3.0 features (new look menus, memory pools).
- Style Guide compliant.
- Completely font-sensitive, user may select which fonts to use.
- All settings can be easily changed from within *Spot*.
- Fast importing/exporting.
- Automatically creates new areas for you, no tedious work.
- Special fast message base format with only a few files per area.
- Optional - fully transparent - message base crunching.
- Message list with powerful functions (eg search body text).
- Message thread linking based on subject and MSGID kludge.
- Excellent support for multiple character sets (LATIN-1, IBM).
- Built-in, fully asynchronous Fido file request capabilities.
- Multi-bossing and multi-domain

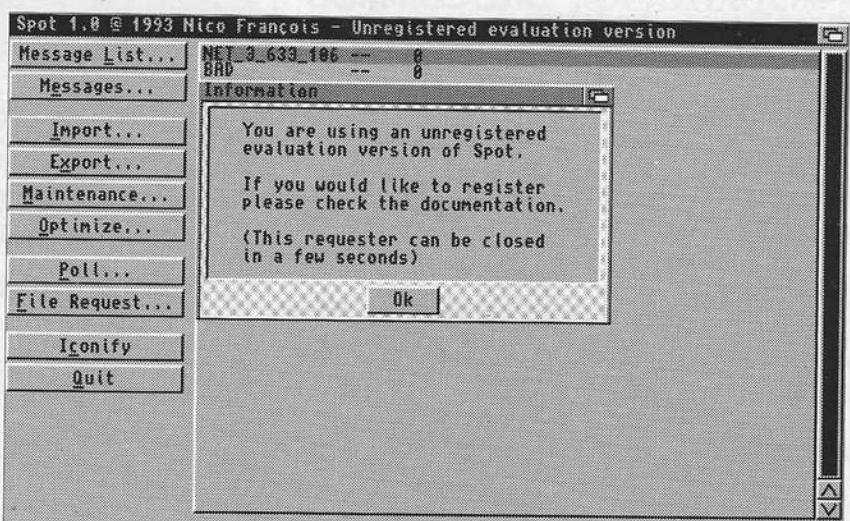
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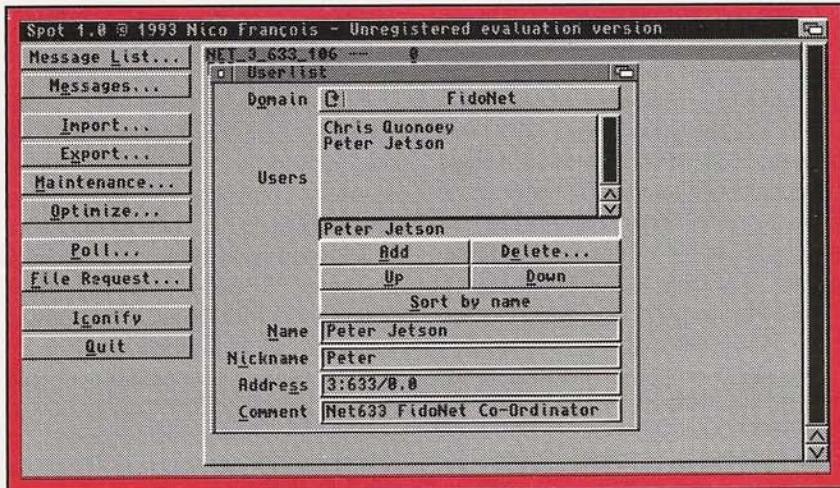
- Userlist editor. Every domain has its own userlist.
- AREXX port ... and more!

Getting started as a point on a world wide network such as Fidonet can be extremely confusing and daunting to someone just starting out, so the easier the software is to get up and running, the better. *SPOT* has to my mind achieved this without sacrificing power or usability at all and is a credit to its author. I had it set up here on the HD, ready to accept its first mail bundle in less than 15 minutes. What makes it so easy is that if you forget to specify a field or path, *SPOT* will prompt and create it for you in most cases on the fly. If it can't do that, it will pop up a requester offering suggestions on a solution to the problem. Absolutely brilliant!

The negative side is that the L-Plate point operator is still going to have to battle through the confusing setup procedures of getting a mailer up and running. The author of *SPOT* has written his software to take full advantage of the highly popular *TRAPDOOR* mailer by Maximilian Hantsch & Martin Laubach so that would be the one to go for, but it's nowhere near as straightforward to setup as *SPOT* and has been the cause of many a headache to the budding point operator.

Nagging feature - a requester that pops up reminding you to pay





Using *SPOT* is a pleasure. The only noticeable nagging feature is a requester which pops up reminding you the software has not yet been paid for. A few mouse clicks chasing the requester around the screen later and you're on

your way.

SPOT has a few "niceties" disabled in the unregistered version, however is still fully usable and you are given licence to trial it for 30 days before registration is required.

At time of writing, *SPOT* is only available from a couple of BBS sites around Australia but can certainly be downloaded from Andy's Attic here in Vic. However by the time this goes to print, it will also be available at Prime Artifax and Megadisc PD libraries. Get it one way or another but do get it and check it out, I seriously doubt you'll be sorry.

If you want more information on *SPOT*, you can send the author Netmail from your nearest Fidonet participating board at 2:292/603.10 or alternatively, snail mail him by writing to: Nico Francois, Corbielaan 13B-3060 Bertem, Belgium.

SPOT is distributed under the ShareWare concept and will set you back US\$30 to become a registered user of the product. At time of writing, there is no known Australian registration or support site.

As a side note, *Foozle* die-hards will be pleased to hear that Peter

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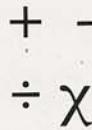
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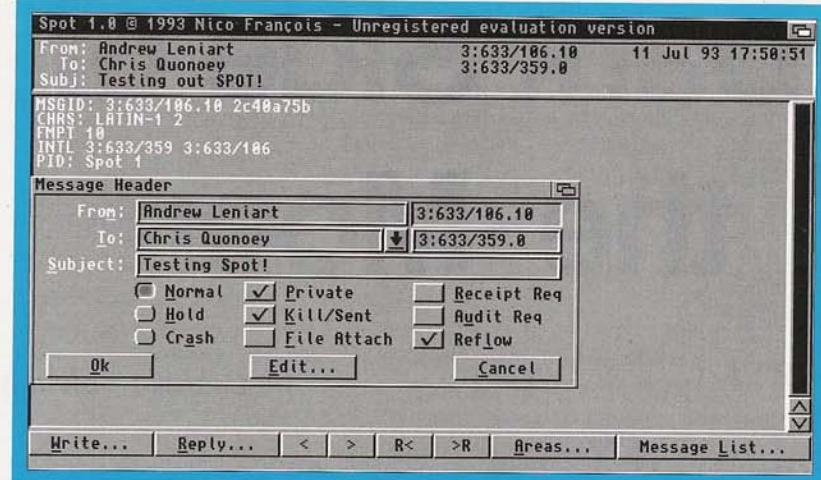
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 **Pactronics**

Hasselmeier has just released an update to *Foozle* which is also available for download or file request (Fidonet/Amiganet nodelisted systems only) here at Andy's Attic. Filename is FZ103.LHA Though the update has been a long time coming, *Foozle* users will probably be disappointed to learn that it's mainly just some bug fixes. In the author's own words ...

"Although it has been quite some time since version 1.02 has been released, this update only includes a few bugfixes. This is because most of the development effort is put into a completely new editor. Furthermore, I do not have much time left at present."

All the more reason to check out *SPOT!* *SPOT* may be file requested from Andy's Attic (3:633/106 @fidonet) under the magic filename of *SPOT*. Again, only Fidonet and Amiganet nodelisted systems can freq. Anyone can log on and download it the regular way though. Andy's Attic is and always will be a



free and friendly BBS system.

Concluding

That's all we have room for this month and brings us to the end of an-

other column. Be sure to join us again next month where we'll continue our look at the new WB2.0, the utilities available to enhance it further and perhaps answer a letter or two. Till then ...

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Dark Side of the Moon

by Graham Bowden

No doubt it would be a simple matter to draw a very dark grey filled circle on a black background and declare it as a picture of the dark side of the moon, but that sort of bone idle artistry is probably what turned Floyd pink with rage in the first place. For our dark side we will first create a full moon.

Let's look at constructing the moon I mentioned last month. The mechanics of constructing a surface anim-brush were adequately covered in that article and you may recall special mention be-

ing made of the way in which the surface brush pre-animation was created.

Remember that by employing the Go Back feature and adjusting the Move direction in the Move requester prior to beginning the second half of the surface brush pre-animation we were left with a single copy of the planetary surface in frame one.

The surface brush for the Earth, which was 136 pixels wide (as shown in Figure 1) was moved 136 pixels in 34 frames before the Move requester was recalled, Go Back was clicked, the

Move direction was set to the second move as in Figure 1 before drawing the second half of the pre-animation.

And you may recall I also said that this method of preparing the pre-animation for the surface brush made things easier when picking up an animbrush in certain situations. This moon is one such situation. I'll explain.

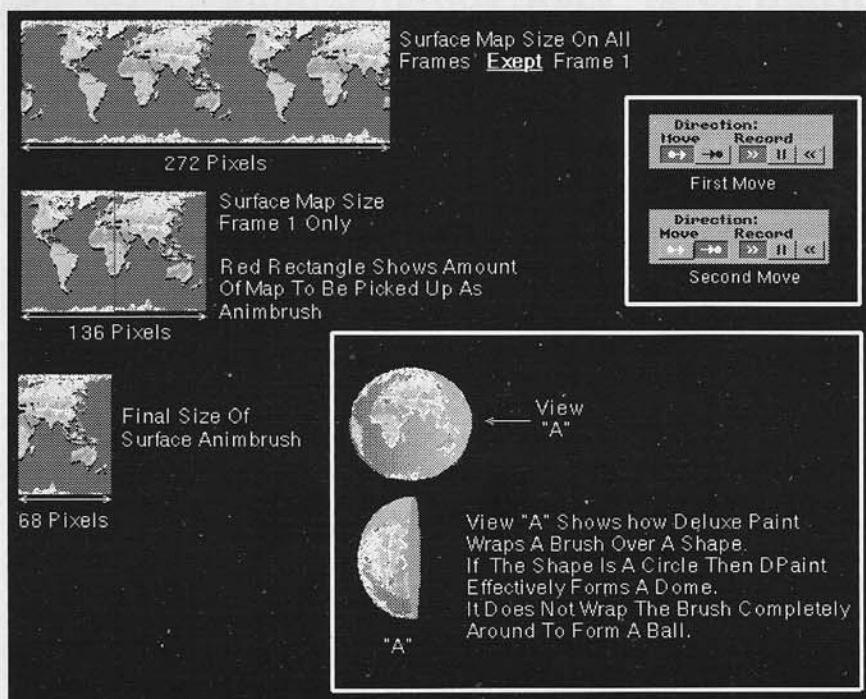
"a spinning moon which can itself be grabbed as an animbrush, ready to be adjusted into an orbiting moon brush"

DPaint's wrap fill technique only wraps the custom brush around the visible half of whatever shape was created, in this case a circle. This forms a dome, once again as shown in Figure 1. When creating an animation of a recognizable planet (such as good ol' Earth) a serious glitch occurs if the full width of the surface in frame one of the pre-animation is picked up as an animbrush.

Anyone who's tried creating the World with such a full width animbrush will have found that continents and islands disappear around one side of the globe and instantaneously reappear on the other side. If we lived on such a world, why, the night would pass in the blink of an eye. Where would all our quality computing time go? And our quality, um ... other time too. Picking up half the surface in cases such as this causes a respectable time to elapse before the land masses return. 'Nuff said.

Go Back

When creating an animbrush for an unrecognisable planet - or moon - however, the entire surface in frame one of the pre-animation can be grabbed for the brush. This is where my "Go Back" method of animation comes into its own. Remember, when the surface pre-animation is completed frame one has a single copy of the surface map on it while all the other frames have a double map on them.



All that's necessary to pick up the brush for an unfamiliar moon/planet is simply to grab exactly the surface map in animation frame one as an animbrush and away we go.

So what if features return on one side of the imaginary moon as they disappear off the other, the fact that the surface is unfamiliar totally disguises this characteristic. But how hard is it to draw an unfamiliar lunar surface? What can I say? I suppose I could say not very.

First, the moon appears reasonably light from Earth so select a light grey colour and draw a filled rectangle as a base for the map. Moons, in my limited experience, have craters and craters thankfully are very easy to draw. Figure 2 shows how.

Drawing the surface

Create a range of greys, select the horizontal fill type from the fill type requester and draw a filled circle. Press Alt/r to reverse the range direction before drawing a slightly smaller filled circle. Pick the smaller shape up as a brush and stamp it down inside the larger. For variety try using filled ellipses rather than circles.

If speed of drawing is important simply draw the second circle or ellipse inside the first rather than creating it as a separate brush. Once the craters are drawn, pick them up as brushes and stamp them onto the previously drawn rectangle.

To make it easy to stay within the confines of the filled rectangle being

used for the surface map why not create a stencil which protects the background colour so only the light grey can be drawn upon. With the craters completed you'll find the shadowy hills and smaller pock marks are also an absolute snap to draw using *Deluxe Paint*'s "Shade" drawing mode.

Using shade

Many artists I've found are rather unsure of the effects created when using Shade so I've taken the liberty of including a demonstration in Figure 2. The colour patches in Figure 2b show the range of greys I used to create my moon. Also in 2b I've drawn a large filled circle using the darkest of these greys.

I then selected Shade and stamped down a few squares using the left mouse button to demonstrate its effect. Note that each time the brush is stamped when using the left mouse button the colour that results on screen is the next one down the colour range. This will occur only for the colours within the selected range and only until the lowest colour is reached.

Stamping the brush down on a colour that is not within the range will have no effect - at least with *Deluxe Paint 4* and higher. Using the right mouse button steps the effect up through the colour range. Now, the hills and pock marks.

Select a one pixel brush and click the airbrush tool with the right mouse button. Adjust the airbrush size down to about a four pixel wide spray pattern

and ensure Shade is the selected painting mode and the range of greys are the currently selected colour range. With the earlier stencil still active spray around the surface swapping between the left and right mouse buttons to create the desired contours.

Once the surface is completed to your satisfaction, pick it up as a brush, then refer to last month's tutorial to measure its width, set up the correct number of animation frames and draw the surface brush pre-animation before grabbing the actual surface animbrush.

Save this animbrush before clearing all frames and drawing down a rotating (through 360 "Z" angle degrees) filled circle which can then be animfilled using the surface animbrush with "Wrap" selected from the Fill type requester.

Voila! There is a spinning moon which can itself be grabbed as an animbrush, ready to be adjusted into an orbiting moon brush as explained in my "Warping the Dice" tutorial a couple of months back. But before rushing into a planetary system how about moving on to drawing a half moon.

This will be a realistic halfish moon to match the shaded Earth created last month.

Figure 3 shows the steps used for the real half moon. Follow the diagrams clockwise from the top left. Before beginning however, call up the Range requester (Ctrl/r) and add the black background colour to the darkest end of the moon's colour range.

This will allow the shading of the moon to fade to the background colour as our process proceeds. The first pic-

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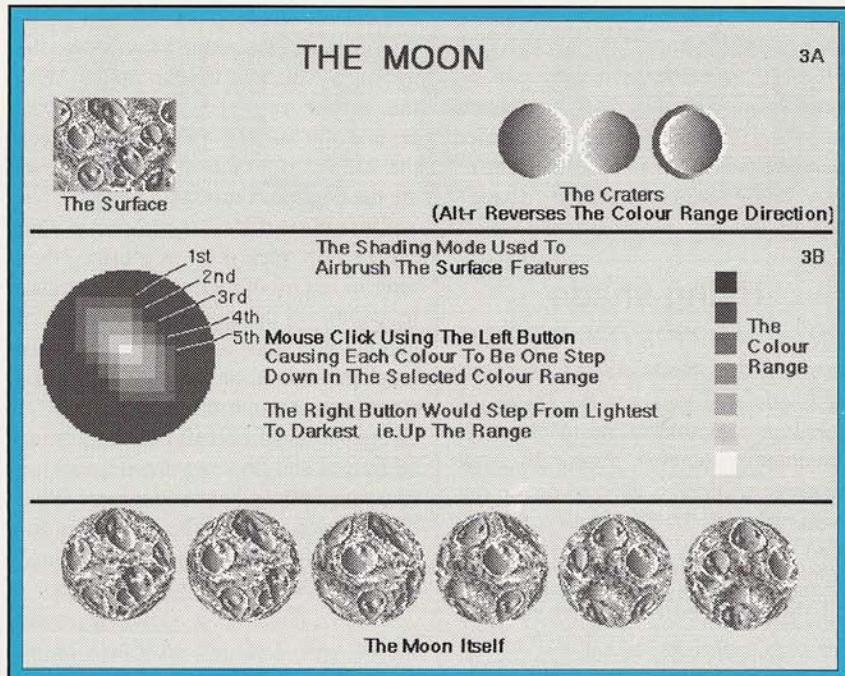


Figure 2

ture shows a suitably sized brush placed partly over the moon in animation frame one. I simply grabbed the moon as it appeared in frame one as a custom brush, but a filled circle a little larger than the moon would make a more appropriate brush.

Whatever brush you choose to use, place it over the moon and note the co-ordinates in the title bar for future reference. Choose "Shade" as the current painting mode before calling up the Spacing requester (Shift/v) and selecting the "Every Nth Dot" button with its corresponding number set to about 3. Select the vector tool before placing the brush at the previously noted co-ordinates, then draw out a suitably long vector.

As can be seen in Figure 3 a 55 pixel vector was sufficient in my case. Yours may be different. Holding down the "Shift" key while drawing out the vector will constrain the mouse to either the horizontal or vertical plane depend-

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ing on the direction of initial movement.

In this case be careful to move the mouse horizontally initially for a perfectly flat vector every time. When the mouse is released the custom brush will step across the moon's surface gradually shading the colours into the background. If your colours shade the wrong way, hit "Undo" and try again using the other mouse button.

With animation frame one completed move onto each successive frame and repeat the process. Once all frames are wrapped up press keyboard 4 to view your handywork. Pretty neat hey?

So with the mechanics of planetary motion now deeply entrenched in your psyche through the teachings of the last few tutorials, why not set about creating a complete solar system.

Why not create a rotating sun and have a rotating Earth orbit it with a rotating moon orbiting the rotating Earth orbiting the rotating sun and perhaps even add a rotating Apollo space craft orbiting the rotating moon orbiting the rotating Earth orbiting the aaaaaarrrrrgh...

If I ever manage to get my arms out of this, ... struggle, funny coat, I may be able to tell you a thing or two about drawing a glittering comet and a moving stellar background.

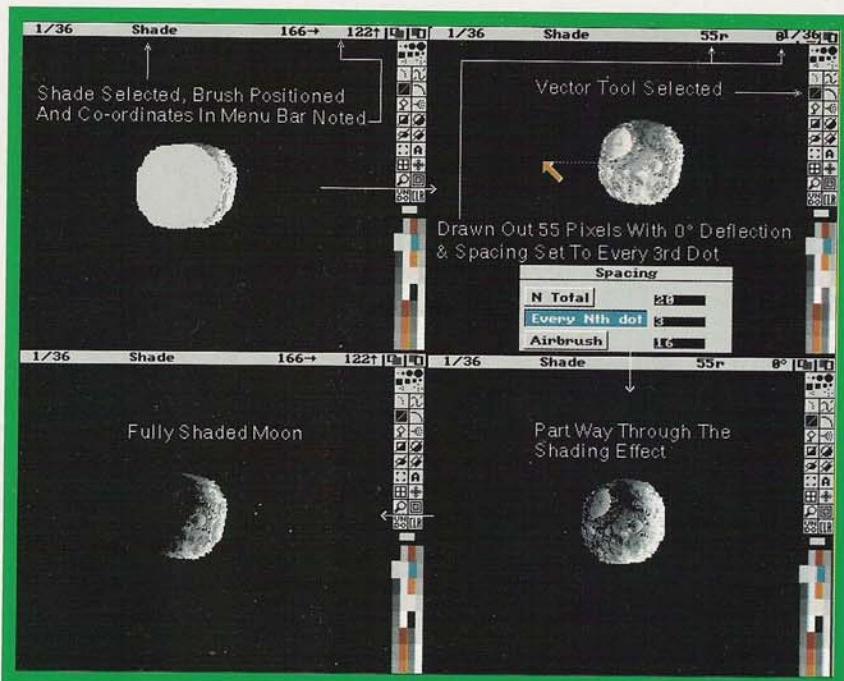


Figure 3

Until then, if there exists a deft and dexterous reader who has an artistic technique to share with the Australian Amiga community, or perhaps a raw and rudimentary reader with a *Deluxe Paint* problem needing clarification by a decrepit old DPainter such as my good self, let me know. I am contactable.

Write to: Graham Bowden, C/o Morayfield Post Office, Morayfield, Qld 4506.

Or if you're ever in the lower right corner of Queensland drop in to a Brisbane Amiga Users Group meeting, I'm usually there. Ah, here comes the nurse with dinner, ciao ... Graham. □

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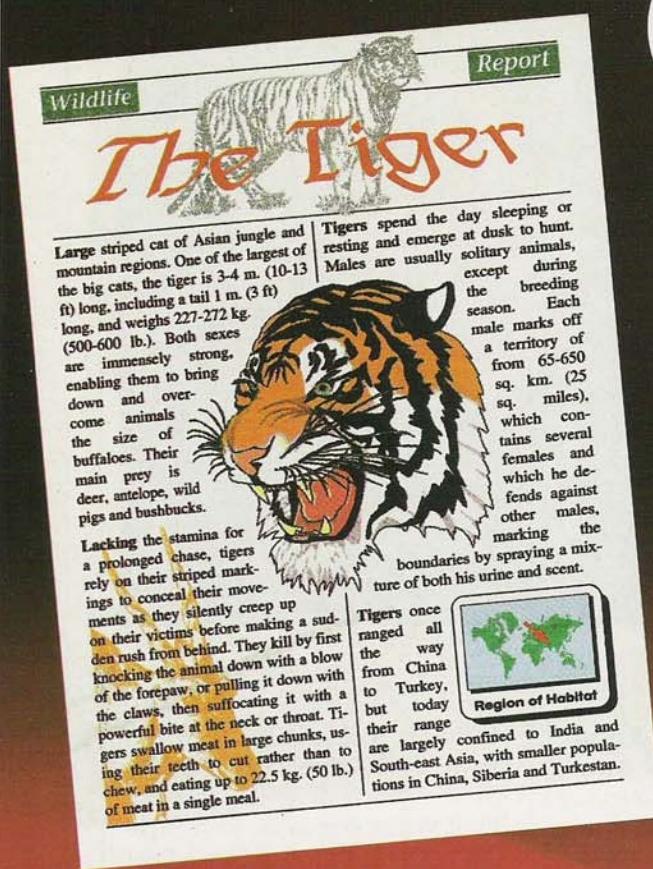
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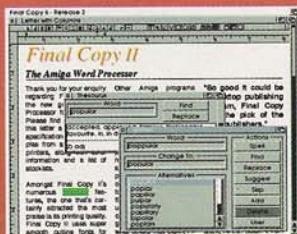


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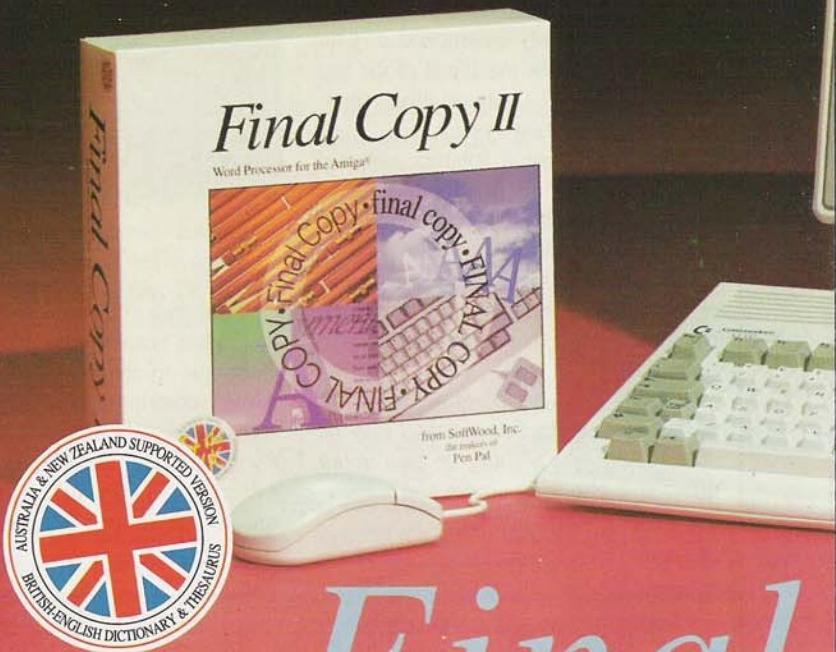
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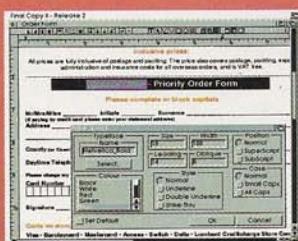
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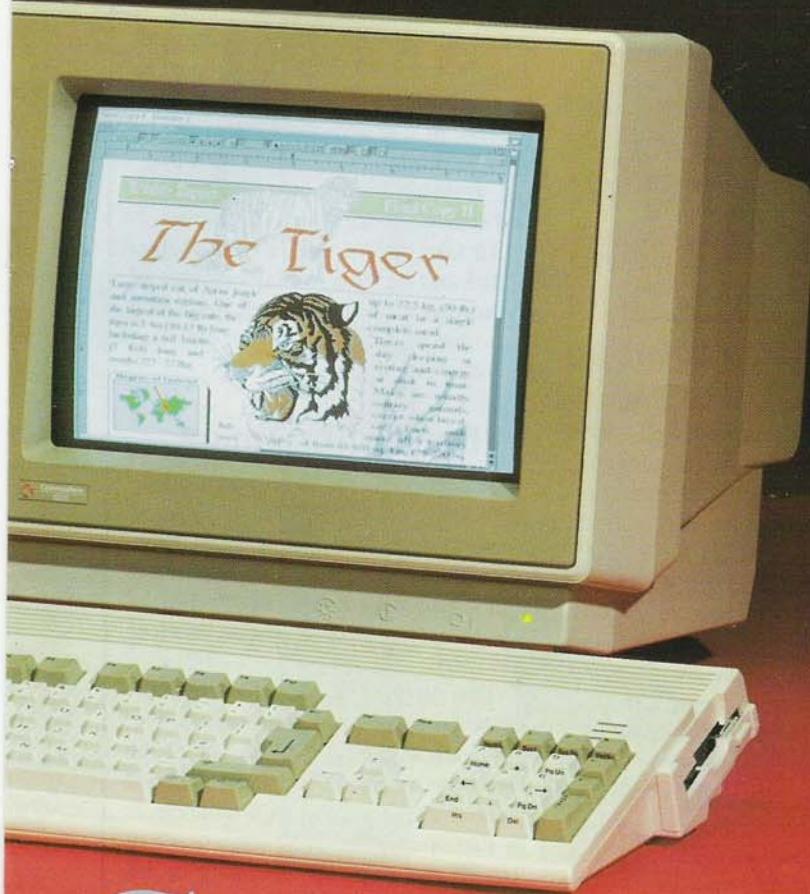
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	PostScript Font Outlines on all Printers	NO	YES
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	Download Extra Fonts to PostScript Printer	NO, Can't download extra fonts	YES, Automatic
	Landscape (Sideways) Printing on all Printers	NO	YES, Automatic
	Reclaim Printing Resolution (Quality) of Scaled (Reduced and Enlarged) Graphic Images	NO	YES, Same High Quality when Reduced and Enlarged
GrAPHiCS	Print any Text or Graphic in Colour	YES	YES
	No. of Colours Printed in Imported Pictures	Limited by Screen Mode Used	Output as Original Image
	Graphics Printing (HAM & IFF IBLM)	Good if Graphics not Scaled	Always Best Possible
	Text Width (Compress & Expand)	NO	YES
	Variable Text Obliquing (Slanted Text)	NO	YES
	Both Positive and Negative Attributes	NO	YES
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	Create Border around Graphics and Pictures	NO	YES
EdiTinG and FoRmatting	British-English Spelling Checker	YES, Collins Proximity with Legal & Medical Supplements	YES, Collins Proximity with Legal & Medical Supplements
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	Search & Replace (150 words in 9000, 7 Pages)	61 Seconds (On Amiga A1200)	7 Seconds (On Amiga A1200)
	Index and Table of Contents	YES, Automatic	NO, Requires Manual Entry
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Learn to Play the Piano

by Stan Nirenberg

I can still remember the good old days when my parents tried to instill in me a bit of culture. They would send me to piano lessons every Wednesday evening. The routine in those days was based around perfecting technique through repetitious practice of scales, arpeggios and numerous other drills.

In between there was the fun of learning to play new compositions. At least I was lucky - my teacher was kindly. I was reading somewhere that Beethoven (who taught piano in his spare time to help make ends meet) was usually impatient with his pupils and would hit them over the knuckles when they made a mistake.

In today's fast, materialistic society, we all want to be virtuoso pianists in no time flat and with the least amount of effort possible. The bad news is that there is absolutely no short cut that I know of to becoming proficient at playing any instrument - results come only through hours of practice.

The approach adopted these days for teaching children to play the piano has changed, in the same way that people have moved away from forcing an education onto children towards nurturing and encouraging them to use their in-built curiosity to learn.

A number of piano teaching methods are widely available, music has become a more important part of the curriculum in many schools and a number of music courses (most notably, Yamaha

and Suzuki) have become well established. The emphasis is on capturing the interest of the potential musicians through fun activities so that students are encouraged to put in the practice that is required to achieve good results.

The other big advance in musical education has been due to the technological revolution that we are all experiencing, particularly in electronics.

Whereas 20 or 30 years ago we had to make do with acoustic instruments, today we have access to any number of electronic keyboards, some even emulating the sound and feel of a real piano. Another interesting development has

been the marrying of modern computer electronics to traditional acoustic instruments to produce the modern version of the player piano.

However, instead of using a paper role with perforations, the music is stored in digital format on computer disk. Prerecorded disks can be used as an example of how pieces can be performed. In addition, this system can be used to record the student's own playing, allowing him or her to stand back and critically evaluate their progress.

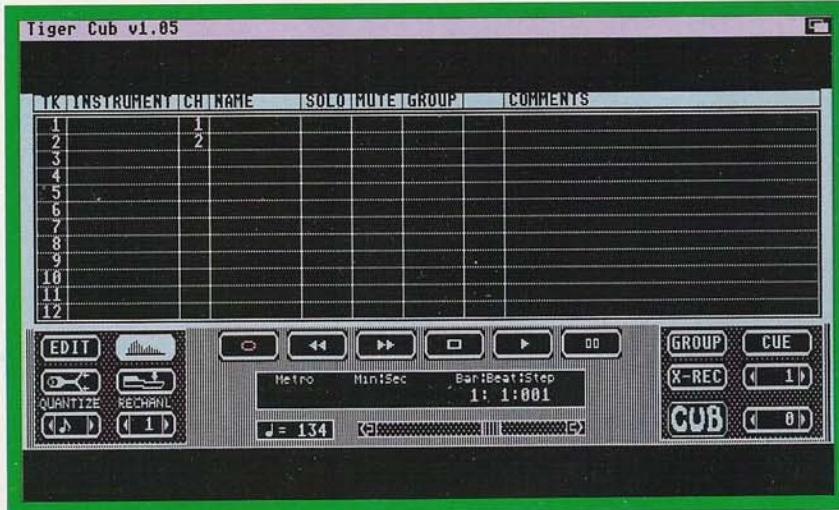
To take this even further, the electronics can be used to play one part of the composition (say the left hand of a piano piece) while the student practices the other part (the right hand).

Enter your Amiga

This concept has been taken a step further with the release of the Miracle Piano system a couple of years back. Here, the Miracle Piano (an electronic, four octave keyboard) is attached to the Amiga computer via a special interface and cable.

The supplied software controls the keyboard and provides the student with guidance and accompaniment as he learns the progressively harder series of piano works. The software is quite clever in that it includes a structured set of lessons and helps the user develop his

Figure 1 - Tape recorder screen of Tiger Cub



or her musical skills. The package as a whole is well priced and provides a good introduction to music.

For those who already have a keyboard or are contemplating buying something better than the Miracle Piano, there is an alternative. One of the drawbacks of the Miracle Piano is that it has a four octave keyboard which means that it is not possible to play very complex pieces of music.

The more standard electronic keyboard provides a range of five octaves, and can be purchased with all the bells and whistles (and other sound effects!) imaginable, limited only by the size of one's wallet.

***"pianists in no time flat
and with the least amount
of effort possible"***

A five octave keyboard will be suitable for the beginning pianist for a number of years, but ultimately, there will come a time when there is a need to go to a full size piano keyboard to play the more challenging and interesting pieces of music.

So what is the alternative? If the electronic keyboard is MIDI capable (I shall explain all in a minute), purchasing a MIDI interface for the Amiga and using sequencing software allows you to help the budding pianist get more value out of his instrument. But first, some more technical talk.

MIDI

What is MIDI? It stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface and is a standard developed by the music industry to allow electronic instruments, drum machines and sequencers to be connected together. In fact, you may have noticed that a lot of modern bands use computer controlled instruments during their performances to produce a sound that would normally require a much larger orchestra of live musicians.

To use MIDI capable instruments with your computer, you need to buy a MIDI interface. This is usually a small box that attaches to the serial port of the Amiga and incorporates a number of sockets labelled in, out and through.

Note that the through socket is not necessary and is only useful if you want to connect more than one electronic instrument to the computer. A pair of cables are used to connect the electronic keyboard to the MIDI interface - instructions should be available with the interface when you purchase it.

The cost of an interface varies and starts from about \$50. The more expensive units seldom work better but their construction quality is usually superior.

It is worthwhile buying a MIDI interface that allows the serial port to be switched through. This allows you to keep the interface always connected to the computer but still use your modem when you want to.

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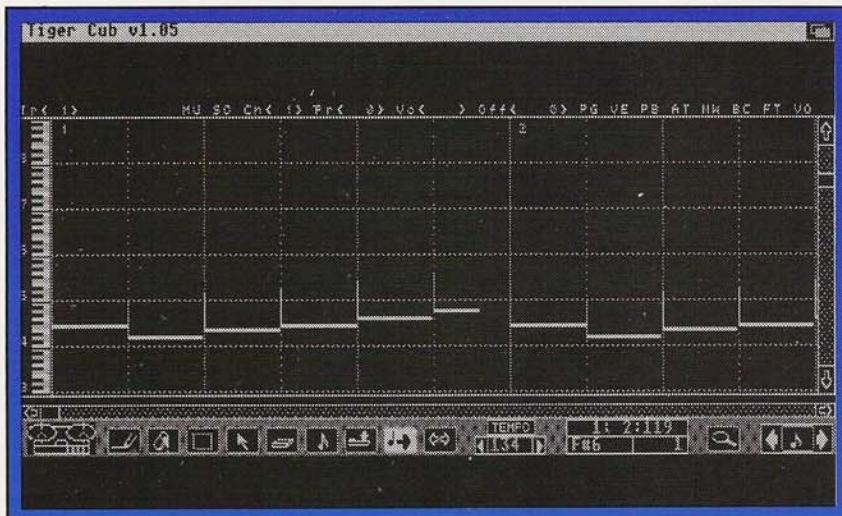


Figure 2 - *Tiger Cub* editing screen

Sequencing software

The sequencing software is what makes it all happen. The easiest way to describe a sequencer is to liken it to an

electronic tape recorder - it allows you to record and play back music on an electronic keyboard. In fact, most sequencing software represents its functions in the form of a tape recorder on

screen (see Figure 1).

However, there is much more to this software. Generally, a sequencer gives the user complete control of how the music is played or recorded. It can control volume, program (the sound that is produced), how hard each note is played (the velocity), how many parts are played (you can run a whole band from the one keyboard) and so on.

In addition, the software provides extensive editing facilities, which is not only great for fixing up those mistakes we make when recording (I certainly do) but adds a creative dimension to the whole process. This sure beats a traditional tape recorder! Figure 2 shows the *Tiger Cub* editing screen.

As with MIDI interfaces, a whole raft of sequencing software is available, varying widely in price. I use the somewhat ageing (and in some respects limited) *Tiger Cub* package. I bought this as part of the *Alter Audio* pack that Commodore were selling a few years



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back, although the software can be purchased separately for around \$100 to \$150.

For those who want something better (and much more expensive), there is *Dr T's KCS or Bars and Pipes Professional*. Note that the top end software is superior to the simpler packages in terms of functionality and ease of use. For those on a really tight budget, have a look at what is available in the public domain libraries. A number of MIDI compatible packages are available.

Putting it all together

Our young son has been taking piano lessons for about 18 months so far. In this time I have seen him make great progress, and as a result of this his desire to become more proficient at the instrument has also grown. I am sharing this with you to show that encouragement and fun are two of the most important ingredients to foster learning.

The child's natural curiosity is the other. And part of this has been the Amiga computer.

To help with the musical education, I recorded a number of the pieces that he was learning at the time. It is not important to be able to play the instrument well at all because the sequencing software can help enormously. For a start, the left and right hand parts of the piece can be recorded separately, and at a much slower speed than they would be normally played. Any mistakes can then be edited out.

The music can then be replayed to help the child with practice. The speed of replay can be chosen to match the abilities of the child, and increased as skill improves. The whole piece can be played as an example, or the right or left hand can be played as an accompaniment while the other part is played by the child.

This not only forces the child to keep time, but also shows how the melody

should sound. The more adventurous parent can create a more elaborate accompaniment with other instrument sounds or drum rhythms. And older children (and adults for that matter) may wish to experiment with multipart harmony and creating music.

As you may have already guessed, this short article cannot go into the details of setting up and using a MIDI studio. I simply want to present you with ideas and start you experimenting with the possibilities. Instructions for using a MIDI interface and sequencing software should be available with the products when you buy them.

Correspondence

I would be more than happy to share your experiences or suggestions. As usual, please write in with your comments, questions, etc to me care of ACAR or directly to PO Box 136, Forest Hill, Vic 3131. □

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CanDo Column

by Greg Abernethy

Make Your Own Calendar

This month we will be designing a Calendar Maker, that will enable you to print a calendar for any month or to print calendars for a complete year.

The program requires that you have the font DIAMOND 20 in your fonts drawer and GraphicDump in the same directory as the deck. I use GraphicDump for printing the calendar but you may prefer to save the calendar as an IFF file and print it from *Deluxe Paint* or another graphic printing program. The main drawback with GraphicDump is the 10 second delay before printing commences. This tutorial will consist of one card and a SubDeck.

Creating the Calendar Page

The specifications for the window are:

```
NO WINDOW NAME
WINDOW SPECIFICATIONS
X POSITION = 0 : Y POSITION = 0
WIDTH = 320 : HEIGHT = 256
NUMBER OF COLOURS = 4
NO GADGETS
WINDOW OPTIONS
THE WINDOW HAS INVISIBLE BORDERS TRY TO
OPEN WINDOW ON WORKBENCH
```

```
CARD SPECIFICATIONS
CARD NAME "Calendar"
BEFOREATTACHMENT SCRIPT
LoadSubDeck TheCurrentDirectory||"CalSub","Sub"
Let Names = "January:February:March:April:May:
June:July:August:September:October:November:December"
Let Month = GetWord(TheDate,1,"")
If GetChars(Month,1,1) = "0"
```

all the months of the year, and then sets the MONTH and YEAR variables correctly for creating the calendar for the current month.

```
AFTERATTACHMENT SCRIPT
DetachObject "PrintMonth"
DetachObject "PrintYear"
Do "DrawDates"
```

Explanation:

This script detaches the print objects, (explained in detail later) and then draws the calendar for the current month on the screen.

```
MESSAGEFROMSUBDECK SCRIPT
Let Month = ARG2
Let Year = ARG3
If ARG1 = "M"
  ClearWindow
  Do "CreateYear"
  Do "DrawDates"
ElseIf ARG1 = "PM"
  ReattachObject "PrintMonth"
ElseIf ARG1 = "PY"
  ReattachObject "PrintYear"
EndIf
```

Explanation:

This script receives instructions from the SubDeck card. (See SubDeck section for full details).



Creating the Timer Objects

It is necessary to create two timer objects for printing either the calendar for the current month or for the year. This is due to the fact that when a message is received from a SubDeck the SubDeck window is not removed from the screen until the script has been executed. If I tried to print the current month with the SubDeck window still displayed, it would be printed as well. The only solution is to activate a timer, so that the MessageFromSubDeck script can finish executing before any printing operation is commenced.

"PrintMonth" TIMER OBJECT

```
NAME "PrintMonth"
MINUTES 0
SECONDS 0
JIFFIES 10

SCRIPT
DetachObject "PopUp"
Dos TheCurrentDirectory||"GraphicDump"
ReattachObject "PopUp"
DetachObject "PrintMonth"
```

Explanation:

This script detaches the object for the F1 key, runs GraphicDump using the Dos command, and then reattaches the F1 key object, and detaches the "PrintMonth" Timer object.

"PrintYear" TIMER OBJECT

```
NAME "PrintYear"
MINUTES 0
SECONDS 0
JIFFIES 10

SCRIPT
DetachObject "PopUp"
Let Month = 0
Loop
  Let Month = Month + 1
  ClearWindow
  Do "CreateYear"
  Do "DrawDates"
  Dos TheCurrentDirectory||"GraphicDump"
Until Month = 12
ReattachObject "PopUp"
DetachObject "PrintYear"
```

Explanation:

This script detaches the object for the F1 key, and then uses a loop to print each month for the selected year using GraphicDump. It then reattaches the F1

key object, and detaches the "PrintYear" Timer object.

Creating the Key Input Objects

There are two Key Input objects to be designed. They are;

```
"PopUp" KEY INPUT OBJECT
NAME "PopUp"
QUALIFIER NONE
KEY CODE F1
RELEASED SCRIPT
OpenRequester "Sub","Options",Month,Year
```

Explanation:

This script simply calls the SubDeck, and passes the current month and year to it.

```
"Quit" KEY INPUT OBJECT
NAME "PopUp"
QUALIFIER NONE
KEY CODE ESCAPE
RELEASED SCRIPT
Quit

ROUTINES
CREATEYEAR Routine SCRIPT
```

```
If Year/4 = Integer(Year/4)
  Let Days = "31/29/31/30/31/30/31/31/30/30/
31"
Else
  Let Days = "31/28/31/30/31/30/31/31/30/31/30/
31"
Endif
Dispose Months
Let x = 0
Loop
  Let x = x + 1
  Let Months[x].Days = GetWord(Days,x,"/")
Until x = 12
```

This Routine sets the number of days for each month of the current year. It is necessary to check if the year is a leap year by dividing the year by four to see if it divides evenly in which case it is a leap year.

```
"DrawDates" ROUTINE
SetPen 1
DrawRectangle 7,0,307,30
DrawRectangle 8,1,305,28
Let x = 7
Let y = 31
Loop
  DrawRectangle x,y,43,38
  DrawRectangle x + 1,y + 1,41,36
  Let x = x + 44
  If x > 308
    Let x = 7
```

```
  Let y = y + 39
Endif
Until y > 201
DrawRectangle 7,226,307,30
DrawRectangle 8,227,305,28
SetPrintFont "diamond",20
PrintText CenterString(GetWord(Names,
Month,".")||Year,32),0,6
PrintText CenterString("CALENDAR",32),0,234
Let z = 0
Let x = 10
Let y = 34
Loop
  Let z = z + 1
  Do "WhichDay",z,Month,Year
  SetPrintFont "diamond",12
  PrintText wd,x,y
  SetPrintFont "diamond",20
  PrintText RightJustify(z,2),x + 12,y + 17
  Let x = x + 44
  If x > 308
    Let x = 0
    Let y = y + 39
  Endif
Until z = Months[Month].Days
```

This Routine draws the calendar for the current month on the screen. I have used white as the background colour and black as the foreground colour.

```
"WhichDay" ROUTINE
Let Dy = ARG1
Let Mn = ARG2
Let Yr = ARG3
If Mn < 3
  Let Mn = Mn + 12
  Let Yr = Yr - 1
Endif
Let n=Dy+2*Mn+Whole(.60009*(Mn+1))
+Yr+Whole(Yr/4)-Whole(Yr/100)+Whole(Yr/400)+2
Let n = Whole((n/7 - Whole(n/7))*7+.5)
If n = 0
  Let wd = "SAT"
Elseif n = 1
  Let wd = "SUN"
Elseif n = 2
```



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```
Let wd = "MON"
Elseif n = 3
    Let wd = "TUE"
Elseif n = 4
    Let wd = "WED"
Elseif n = 5
    Let wd = "THU"
Else
    Let wd = "FRI"
Endif
```

This routine determines the actual day for the current date.

Creating the SubDeck Card

The specifications for the window are:

```
WINDOW NAME "Calendar Options..."
WINDOW SPECIFICATIONS
X POSITION = 40 : Y POSITION = 30
WIDTH = 240 : HEIGHT = 110
NUMBER OF COLOURS = 4
CLOSE GADGET : DRAG BAR GADGET
WINDOW OPTIONS
THE WINDOW HAS VISIBLE BORDERS TRY TO
OPEN WINDOW ON THE CURRENT SCREEN
CLOSEBUTTON Script
Quit
```

```
CARD SPECIFICATIONS
CARD NAME "Options"
BEFOREATTACHMENT SCRIPT
Let Month = ARG1
Let Year = ARG2
Let Months =
"January:February:March:April:May:June:July:
August:September:October:November:December"
```

Explanation:

The arguments sent from the Parent Deck are set as well as the MONTHS variable.

AFTERATTACHMENT SCRIPT

```
SetPen 1
PrintText "Month",15,21
PrintText "Year",15,5
DrawBorder 70,18,18,7,DOUBLEBEVEL
PrintText ">",71,18
DrawBorder 70,30,18,7,DOUBLEBEVEL
PrintText "<",71,30
DrawBorder 70,48,18,7,DOUBLEBEVEL
PrintText ">",71,48
DrawBorder 70,60,18,7,DOUBLEBEVEL
PrintText "<",71,60
SetText "Month",GetWord(Months,Month,:")
SetText "Year",Year
```

Explanation:

This script sets the FORWARD and REVERSE arrows and sets the current month and year fields.

FORWARD AND REVERSE BUTTON SPECIFICATIONS

```
MONTH FORWARD BUTTON
NAME "MUp"
ORIGIN X = 70 : Y = 18
SIZE X = 18 : Y = 7
NO BORDER : COMPLEMENT
CLICK SCRIPT
Loop
    Let Month = Month + 1
    If Month = 13
        Let Month = 1
    Endif
    SetText "Month",GetWord(Months,Month,:")
    Delay 0,0,5
Until Not ObjectState("MUp")
```

```
RELEASE SCRIPT
SendToParentDeck "M",Month,Year
```

MONTH REVERSE BUTTON

```
NAME "MDown"
```

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```

ORIGIN X = 70 : Y = 30
SIZE X = 18 : Y = 7
NO BORDER : COMPLEMENT
CLICK SCRIPT
Loop
Let Month = Month - 1
If Month = 0
  Let Month = 12
Endif
SetText "Month",GetWord(Months,Month,:")
Delay 0,0,5
Until Not ObjectState("MDown")

RELEASE SCRIPT
SendToParentDeck "M",Month,Year

YEAR FORWARD BUTTON
NAME "YUp"
ORIGIN X = 70 : Y = 48
SIZE X = 18 : Y = 7
NO BORDER : COMPLEMENT
CLICK SCRIPT
Loop
Let Year = Year + 1
SetText "Year",Year
Delay 0,0,5
Until Not ObjectState("YUp")

RELEASE SCRIPT
SendToParentDeck "M",Month,Year

```

```

YEAR REVERSE BUTTON
NAME "YDown"
ORIGIN X = 70 : Y = 60
SIZE X = 18 : Y = 7
NO BORDER : COMPLEMENT
CLICK SCRIPT
Loop
Let Year = Year - 1
SetText "Year",Year
Delay 0,0,5
Until Not ObjectState("YDown")

RELEASE SCRIPT
SendToParentDeck "M",Month,Year

Explanation:
These buttons rotate the month and
year backward and forward.

PRINT MONTH BUTTON
NAME "PMonth"
ORIGIN X = 32 : Y = 73
TEXT "Print Current Month"
SHADOW : COMPLEMENT
RELEASE SCRIPT
SendToParentDeck "PM",Month,Year
Quit

```

```

PRINT YEAR BUTTON
NAME "PYear"
ORIGIN X = 36 : Y = 91
TEXT "Print Current Year"
SHADOW : COMPLEMENT
RELEASE SCRIPT
SendToParentDeck "PY",Month,Year
Quit

MONTH FIELD
NAME "Month"
ORIGIN X = 100 : Y = 22 : WIDTH = 131
BORDER = DOUBLEBEVEL
TYPE = TEXT 32 Characters LEFTJUSTIFY
No SCRIPT

MONTH FIELD
NAME "Year"
ORIGIN X = 100 : Y = 53 : WIDTH = 131
BORDER = DOUBLEBEVEL
TYPE = TEXT 32 Characters LEFTJUSTIFY
No SCRIPT

```

Last Words

The only requirements for this program is that the SubDeck and GraphicDump are in the same location as the Main Deck. Have fun! □

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The C64 Column

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Graham can also supply his own interface program which is compatible with nearly all BASIC and machine language programs, even commercial software. The software features selectable line feeds with carriage return, multi-strike capabilities for up to 10 pass printing, automatic word counting, optional PetSCII to ASCII conversion, transparent mode for graphics, and will emulate device #4. The software is supplied on disk or tape, along with GEOS printer drivers, full instructions and demonstration software for \$5.00.

To order, or for further details, contact Graham Cattley by writing to PO Box N421, Grosvenor Pl, Sydney NSW 2001.

Graphics Guide

One of the more fascinating aspects of the C64, at least in the earlier part of its life, was its graphic capabilities. The C64 was born in an age when chunky

monochrome graphics was the norm on even the larger desktop machines, yet here was an affordable home computer with a 16 colour palette and a surprisingly high resolution display. Certainly, compared with today's Amigas and OpalVision the C64's graphics begin to look a little silly, but it's still a great place to start.

Software Options

GeoPaint

GeoPaint is bundled as part of the GEOS System, making it one of the

easiest and more professional looking packages available. If you're at all familiar with the Macintosh's *MacPaint* then you'll recognise many of *geoPaint*'s elements.

Along the left hand side of the screen is your artist's toolbox. It's here that you select your tool (pen, brush, fill, ruler, etc) which will be applied to the *geoPaint* 'canvas', which takes up most of the remaining screen.

As with all GEOS applications, *geoPaint* is most happily used with a mouse, but joysticks and other input devices are all quite usable.

Unlike many of the other packages listed here, *geoPaint* is designed with printed output in mind. You view only a small portion of the entire available page at a time, making it very easy to create larger page-sized graphics. A full-page preview mode is available should you wish to get an overall view of how your printed page will look.

Availability: *GeoPaint* is part of the GEOS system package, which also includes a full-featured word processor, spell check and a windows-like operating system. GEOS is available from Code One Computer Services for \$69.00 + \$4.00 p/p. Code One Computer Services, PO Box 192, Katoomba NSW 2780, Tel/Fax (047) 57 3982.

The tool menu from Koala Paint



geoCanvas

A relatively new offering from CMD is *geoCanvas*, again for use with GEOS. *geoCanvas* was designed to be a superior alternative to the standard *geoPaint*, a task it achieves with mixed results.

Unlike *geoPaint*, *geoCanvas* will NOT run on a bare minimum system. This beast will require at least 512k of RAM just for starters, and a 1581 drive is highly recommended. It provides many functions that *geoPaint* doesn't allow, such as a polygon tool, a more useful ruler, larger text sizes, and the ability to open up to three documents at a time. In several other areas, however, it doesn't quite come up to *geoPaint's* standard. If you're serious about graphics, and GEOS is your preferred operating system, I'd recommend you both.

It's very easy to trade files from one to the other if you get half way through a job and find you'd prefer to use a feature of the other.

Availability: *GeoCanvas* requires the presence of GEOS and 512k RAM. Price is around \$59.00 + p/p from Logico, PO Box 572, Marrickville NSW 2204 Tel (02) 558 1884. It was also available from Novo Computer Hardware, but at present this company can't be contacted.

OCP Art Studio/Advanced Art Studio

Often described as the best C64 graphics package, *Art Studio* provides quite an impressive range of features. Although mouse support is limited to the older style 1350 mice (which weren't

true mice, rather the joystick's hick cousin from out of town), this package is still very useful.

All of the usual functions are provided (draw, fill, polygon, airbrush), along with a few unexpected features.

Art Studio's big brother, *Advanced Art Studio*, provided even more usefulness in the form of low-resolution as well. Probably the biggest drawback of the C64's colour screen is that it's based on a series of 8 x 8 cards, with a maximum of two colours per card. What this means to the user is that unless a lot of care is taken when filling areas with colour, you'll find fills exceeding their boundaries and creating a horrible jagged effect when adjacent to other filled areas.

Advanced Art Studio provided a low-

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resolution screen option, which provided a compromise. You could now stack more colours closer together without fear of invading the colour cards of other areas, but the overall resolution of the screen was dramatically reduced anyway. Great for colour, lousy for producing good looking monochrome work.

Availability: *OCP Art Studio* and *Advanced Art Studio* are no longer available from retailers, but there's certain to be a lot of secondhand copies floating around. Check your local classifieds.

Koala Painter

At one time the pseudo-standard C64 graphics package. Provides a very large selection of drawing tools which make freehand drawing almost redundant, which is just as well when considering the usefulness of your average joystick when plotting freehand shapes.

Availability: The *Koala Painter Kit* (which also includes various utilities) is currently available from C64 Public Domain (SA), Box 146 GPO, Adelaide, SA 5001.

Format Converters

Also very useful are the many and varied viewers and converters floating around in the public domain. Some are designed for converting between the files from C64 graphics packages (such as between *Koala* and *OCP* formats), while others will let you view or convert from GIFs (common to the IBM world), MAC format (obviously from the Macintosh) and many others. Several converters and sample image files can be found on the PD1 disk which is currently available from Code One for \$6.00, or you can try contacting any of the C64 Public Domain libraries, such as Brunswick Publications.

Users wishing to transfer their C64 graphic files to GIF, JPEG, IFF or Postscript formats, or just directly to MS-DOS or Amiga 3.5" disks, should contact Code One Computer Services (details above) for pricing details. They'll also transfer word processing files from C64 to Amiga/IBM or vice versa. Call, write or fax for more information.

MAIL

Real Programmers Use the Commodore 64!

Victor Bien of Rockdale NSW writes: "Dear Owen, My attitude is that the C64 will remain a suitable base for people to pursue 'real' computer programming; ie. provides a base for low-cost experimenting to gain detailed understanding of modern digital electronics and its interaction with and support of software.

"By real programming, of course, I mean programming in Assembler or machine language. The sort of programming I have in mind are being able to

"Its simple design and, especially now, its low cost makes the C64 almost ideal"

write code to do those fancy things you see on games, writing device drivers, and mastering the interrupt system to do fancy hardware tricks etc. None of these interests require the super high resolution screens of the Amiga or its astronomical amount of memory (compared with the C64).

"Sure, one could pursue such an interest with other computers, but consider these points; The Vic-20 is too small a computer, the Amiga is too expensive, and so are PCs. The heyday of the C64 generated lots of books, so the computer is well documented and ideas to try out abound.

"Admittedly, games on the C64 are so-so. Obviously graphically the Amiga is in a different league, but then the greater resolution comes at a price. The C64 games are as good as the 8-bit Segas and Nintendos though choice of games with equal 'theme' quality is narrower than from them because more money has been poured into the Segas and the Nintendos.

"This brings me to the money as-

pect. It's not the place to get political in a technical magazine, but we need to appreciate that the capitalist system needs to keep growing to stay alive regardless of whether it tramples over all sorts of human considerations. So computers are driven to grow bigger and more powerful regardless as to whether we continue to need all that growing power. Similarly, commercial interests have to remain on the growth treadmill or they can't survive. So money interests with all the neon lights and tantara follow the growth game. But does that mean that once the general commercial interests have passed over something that it loses all value?

"A community of people can keep something viable as long as those people don't make the mistake of thinking that only things of commercial value have real value. This means that the C64 community could continue indefinitely if enough people are interested in the computer in its own right and not for money. Still, you can never tell that people who cut their teeth on the C64 won't develop skills to program the Amiga and other giant computers or other electronic devices and quite unintentionally make big bucks!"

Some interesting points there. Certainly, the C64 still has the capacity to provide an excellent training ground for electronics and programming. Its simple design and, especially now, its low cost makes the C64 almost ideal for this purpose.

Your point regarding the value of a computer to a user is also very valid. Just because the technology is ten years old, is the computer any LESS powerful than it was? It loses value only when one compares it to the current range of machines. The C64 is still as useful as it was ten years ago, it is only that our expectations of computing power have changed.

I'll be back next month with all the latest news and views. Until then, I'd love to hear from you. If you have a news item, short review, question, or suggestion you'd like to submit, please send it to:

The C64 Column, PO Box 288, Gladesville NSW 2111. □

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on page 21.

Phil Campbell's Entertainment

From the Entertainment Editor

Good news! The world of Amiga entertainment is looking bigger and brighter than at any time in the last two years. Sales of the Amiga 1200 are booming, and there's even a revival in Amiga 600 sales at the new, ultra-affordable price. And that means, of course, that there's a whole batch of new potential game players out there, just waiting to get their hands on some software.

That's good news for all of us - software houses that were starting to discard the Amiga as a "has-been" have been forced to sit up and take notice, and as you'll see from the news below, new titles are starting to roll again. The Amiga version of *Body Blows*, for example, has already sold over 1,000 copies!

Add to that the excitement and speculation about Commodore's new CD32 game console, and you're looking at the biggest revival since ABBA.

New from Playcorp

Growing Amiga software distributors Playcorp are expecting a number of new Amiga releases in the next few weeks, including *Battle Isle*, *Woody's World* (from New Zealand's Vision Software), and the Amiga 1200 version of *Civilisation*.

Commodore's new CD32

Speculation is rife about Commodore's hot new entertainment marvel, the CD32.



Syndicate

By the time you read this, the answers should be clear - answers to key questions like "What price?" Commodore are oscillating between \$599 or \$699 for the basic CD entertainment system. Here at the Entertainment end of ACAR, we're hoping they settle on the \$599 price-point - after all, we want them to sell like hotcakes! We'd also like to see the optional MPEG full-motion video card as a standard item - after all, we can always dream.

Hotpoint announces CD32 Software

The software is already rolling for the new CD32, with five new titles announced by Amiga specialists Hotpoint. The key release is a totally new game called *Diggers*, which apparently has to be seen to be believed! There are also enhanced versions of *James Pond II*, *Zool* and *Pinball Dreams* in the pipeline, together with *Microcosm* from Psygnosis and *Jurassic Park* from Ocean, which has unfortunately been slightly delayed.

Amiga hot stuff from Hotpoint

The Amiga market hasn't been forgotten in the CD-frenzy. *Soccer Kid* from

Krysalis should be shipping through Hotpoint now; it's had rave reviews in the overseas press, and we'll be reviewing it here soon! The long awaited *Walker* is also promised in the next few weeks.

Syndicate competition from Electronic Arts

This month, Electronic Arts are giving away six copies of their hot new title *Syndicate* to lucky readers of ACAR. *Syndicate* is a dark, moody game set in a very nasty looking future. Read our review, and make sure you enter the competition! After all, with that many copies on offer, you might even win!

ACAR Entertainment Hints Disks

Did you know that over 200 satisfied readers are now using Official ACAR Entertainment Hints Disks? It's true! Gamers everywhere are hunting through the hundreds of hints, tips, clues and full game solutions packed onto disks 1 and 2 and finding exactly the help they need. Why not join them? Simply send a cheque or postal order for \$5.00 together with a blank disk and a stamped self addressed envelope to ACAR Hints Disk Offer, PO Box 23 Maclean NSW 2463. Specify Disk 1 or 2 - or why not spoil yourself and order both?

Public Domain Plus Game Collection

Looking for some good cheap games to run on your Workbench 2/3 Amiga? Here's a deal too good to miss.

Public Domain Plus have just released two packs, each with 101 games. Crammed on to 10 disks, each set retails for \$39.95 - or you can order both packs for \$75.00.

A quick glance at just one of the disks reveals titles like Baseball, Cluedo, Concentration, an Adventure game, a directory of Card games and a slick looking car-racing simulator.

For more information, or to order your collection, contact Public Domain Plus at PO Box 791, Hornsby, NSW 2077.

(You can also pick up a full PD catalogue disk for just \$2.00.)

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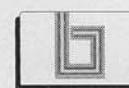


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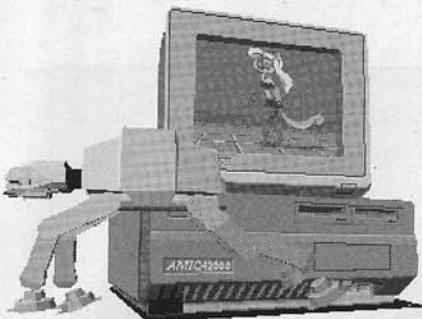
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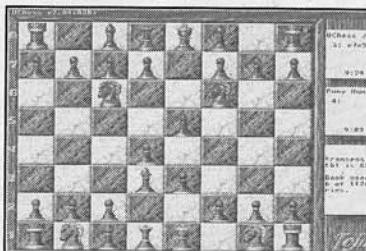
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Mercenary III

- The Ultimate Solution

This month we start our first part of the Mercenary III - The Ultimate Solution. I received eight hand written foolscap pages from "The Man In The Hat" of Nerang in Qld. I've attempted to decipher the hand as well as I could - next time, hat-man, how about typing it on your computer and sending us a disk?

When you start, first drop your Bus Pass. It isn't really a necessary object and the A-Z computer could easily replace it. After dropping the Bus Pass, walk to the rear of the prison, there you

will find the Eagle 9SE and its key. Board the 9SE and fly to Eris, Capital Loc 8-03. Go to the 9th floor, get the A-Z computer & fly to Loc 9-02 and land. Enter the elevator, go to the basement, walk to the rear of the elevator and take the Red Beacon Locator. Go up to the ground floor and fly to Snow Isle Loc 3-04 and you will find the powerglove, an object which allows you to pick up the 9SE Transporters and some people eg PC Bil. Fly to Vesta Loc 5-04 and go to reception and follow the guy's instructions. To enter the election board, fly your plane to Damocles and look for a flashing light. Land next to it and there you will find Puluin one. Pick it up and PC Bill will

zoom out of the election faster than you can say Jack Robinson!

Then fly to these places or take the transporters to the places where the explosives are located and pick them up. See the objects and their locations next month.

Fly to Dion, North and first buy the trophy at Loc 2-05 then fly to Eris, Capital City Loc 14-05. Pick up the timed detonator and fly back to Dion, Dion North and blow up two mine sites. On the second mine site after you blew it up, fly off the planet because Bill'sforcer comes after you. Fly back in to Dion, North and blow up another mine up. Repeat this until all six mine sites are destroyed.

Taa Daa, you have won the game.

Next month, we'll have full details of where you can get everything that is needed to complete *Mercenary III*.

Hall of Fame

As some people with a good eye would have noticed, I have cut some of the old games out of the Hall of Fame to make way for the new breed of games. If your highscore has gone, try sending in some new high scores for some new games.

I recently received a letter from Gerard McDermott who beat the existing Speedball highscore by 10 points. Not a big margin, but it still counts! He wrote that he played 100 consecutive games, no resets and minimal saves. Now that's devotion!

Send your high scores to Juris Graney, 41 Cameron St, Maclean NSW, 2463. Please mark clearly whether your scores are for C64 or Amiga. And remember - NO CHEAT MODES ALLOWED!

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ACTION FIGHTER 132,530 Robbie Baker
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N.Z. STORY 546,695 Embah Beaton		

Scores followed by (C) indicate that the game has been completed/clocked.

Entertainment Letters

Send your entertainment letters, questions, problems, and other interesting stuff to the Entertainment Mailbox, PO Box 23 Maclean NSW 2463.

Pilot Crashes and Larry Problems

Dear Phil, My name is Carlos and I have a problem. I've been all over Sydney looking for a hint book for *Leisure Suit Larry 3* and I have had no luck at all. If you can, can you tell me where I can get one?

Also I have a game called *F-16 Combat Pilot*. The problem is when I load the game, everything is fine until I get to the office where you make your mind up about what you want to do. At that point, after you click on your choice, it just freezes up and crashes back to the beginning. I have an Amiga 500, WB 1.3 with 1 meg of Ram. The funny thing is, my mate has an Amiga 500 with WB 1.2 and it works fine on his computer. Can you tell me why and if so can I do anything about it besides throwing it out?"

Carlos Tizzone
Dulwich Hill, NSW

Ed: About *Larry 3*, you can drop Mike Spiteri a line at Adventurers Realm and he'll send you a free hint sheet - just send a stamped, self addressed envelope.

Alternatively, grab a copy of our Official ACAR Adventurers Realm Hint Book Number 2 - you'll find full solu-

tions for *Larry 2* and *3* together with solutions to 23 other games. Order from Darrien at our ACAR Randwick office, \$10 including postage.

As for *F-16 Combat Pilot*, I've got no idea what's causing your problems, except for stating the obvious - maybe it's a 1.2 game that's not 1.3 compatible! Do you have another friend with a 1.3 machine? Try it on that. Other than throwing the game out, you could sell it to your mate to play on his 1.2 Amiga!

More Larry Problems

Dear Phil, I have been playing *Leisure Suit Larry 1* and I am after some hints. Where can I buy a hint book?

Troy Garth
Goulburn, NSW

Ed: What is this, Larry month or something? Read the advice in the previous letter carefully and do exactly the same - except you'll be needing a copy of Volume 1 of our ACAR Official Adventurers Realm Hint Book (\$9) rather than Volume 2!

Baffling Bat Problems

Dear Phil, I have got a C64 and I was wondering if you or someone else out there had a cheat for *Batman the Movie*. I have been trying to complete it for quite a while and have not succeeded. I'm not much of a games player but this game impressed me and I enjoy playing it.

Jason Huxley
Montrose, Vic

Ed: Someone's sure to come to your aid, Jason. Just stay tuned for the next couple of months - same bat-time, same bat-channel!

Frustrated Fan

Dear Phil, I recently saw a review of *Warlords 2* in *The Australian* - it sounds so cool! The problem is that they only mentioned an IBM and Mac version. The original was good but only had one map. Can you please find out if there are any plans for an Amiga version? If there will be an Amiga version, once I buy it, I won't have to buy another game for six months (that's what happened when I bought *Civilisation* six months

ago! - speaking of which, is there a Sid Meir fan club?).

Harley Kingston
Whiporie, NSW

Ed: From memory, I can't recall having seen an Amiga version of *Warlords 2*. However, you should check it out with Bruce Wilson at Directsoft Australia, on (02) 489 7853. Likewise, if you really want to know if there's a Sid Meir fan club, contact Sega-Ozisoft on (02) 317 0000. Finally, if you want to join the Phil Campbell fan club, just send heaps of money to the address above.

Exile-Ent Fun

Dear Phil, I have been playing the "exile"ent game *Exile* on and off for about a year now. For the last eleven months though, I have been stuck. I am trying to find the two last keys, 5 & 6, can you help? Also how do I find the second whistle, and the radiation pill? And do you know any cheats or hints for this game.

Also, I bought *Eye of the Beholder* a few months back. But now, I've lost the rule books. I still have the map, but if anyone out there would have a copy of them I'd be willing to buy them or pay for photocopies.

David Cucvara
Gordon, NSW

Ed: The first hint for *Exile* is that maybe you should be writing to Adventurers Realm! The second hint is to stick around - someone's bound to help you out anyhow. So if you're reading this and you've got some clues for *Exile* or some paperwork for *Eye of the Beholder*, drop us a line here at ACAR.

Battletech Problems Cured

Dear Phil, In the Entertainment Letters section of the August issue there was a letter from Dr S.D.A Demilio of the ACT. He was after some help with *Battletech*, if he could drop me a line I'm sure I can fix any problems he might have.

Tony Finn
214 Fernleigh Rd
Wagga Wagga NSW 2650
Ed: Thanks Tony - just what the Doctor ordered!

PROJECT X

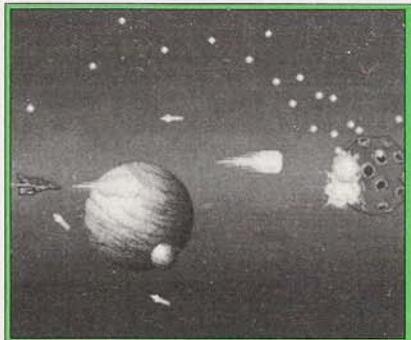
Revised Edition

Federation Pilot Dave Sanna straps himself in to his Hyperion Cruiser and sets out on a deadly battle. Will he survive? Find out for yourself.

It's the same old story - other people's mistakes become your problems. And this one's a doozy. It's those scientists again. Typical. They did it all for a bit of fun one night after they'd been down to the pub. They must have. After all, who really WANTS a bunch of massive, mutated insect-like droids with x-ray eyes? But they made them anyway. And you should see them now!

Dumped on the planet Ryxx and left to degenerate, stagnate and fade out, the sickening mutations not only survived, but thrived, their intelligence circuits warped by their past and left seeking revenge. Fears of an all out attack have forced the Federation into action! Your mission, as usual, is simple enough in theory. Fly to Ryxx, into the heart of the station that the evil spawn has made its own - and blow the whole thing sky high. But can you do it? I doubt it very much.

First, you'll need to select your space



craft. You have three to choose from. They are the CRUX, the best craft for beginners, slow, with many weapons; the HYPERION CRUISER, with moderate fire power and fair speed; and the HUNTER Mk-7. This baby is the ultimate warrior, fast, agile, and lightweight, with good weapons.

Surprisingly enough, there's an in-built Auto-Fire option which as the name suggests allows rapid fire by just holding down the fire button. As the game starts, you're asked to select from a range of power-up options. Choose too many of one type and your ship will become slow and sluggish. On the other hand, if you don't get enough of the right ones, your ship will be wide open to attack. There are nine power-ups in all, and each is extremely dangerous - even more so when they're combined in the correct sequence. Your default ship to start with has everything you need, but powerups like sideshot, plasma, homing missiles and stealth will increase your chance of advancing through the stages.

Graphics are the high point of *Project X*. The best place to start is the ship. All three are drawn extremely well. Their colours are pleasant, and they look fast, lean and mean. The background graphics are excellent too - the folding mountain ranges in stage two are the best I have seen for a long while. The enemy ships are the same high quality as your own, if not better. The scrolling is quick

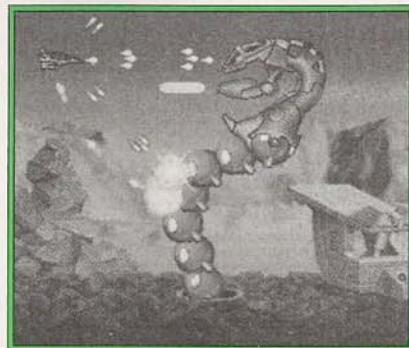
FACTBOX

A top class shoot-em-up with everything you ever dreamed of - superb graphics, atmospheric sound, and exciting and addictive gameplay.

Ratings:

Graphics:	96%
Sound:	92%
Gameplay:	85%
Addictiveness:	97%
Overall:	92%

Distributed by Hotpoint Software (02) 428 7791. RRP \$29.95.



and easy to follow and the animation is superb. What more can I say? For a shoot-em-up, it's a graphical masterpiece.

Sound is effective too. The synthesised voice is the first thing you will notice when you start to play - it explains what weapon you've selected, and warns you of incoming attacks. It certainly adds just the right atmosphere for a game like this. The music is quick and great to listen to - the strong beat gets the heart pumping and the adrenalin running.

I guess by now you'll realise I'm pretty stoked with this game. It has everything needed in a good shoot-em-up - sound, graphics and above all, addictiveness. The options are endless, which means the game will have long term interest. I believe this re-release of *Project X* deserves to be a real hit - it's a great game, and deserves a place in everyone's collection. □

No, it's not a stick-up - it's a classy World War II flight simulator. Laetone Gravolin pulls on his goggles to investigate ...

Reach for the Skies

As I push the throttle forward, my Spitfire gallops down the runway, faster and faster until it feels like the whole world is rushing past me. With one quick snappy movement on the joystick, the old cracked and muddy tyres leave the earth once more. I ease the throttle back, and swing around to head for my destination.

We're playing *Reach for the Skies*, a World War II flight simulation that's very similar to *Their Finest Hour*. You can control either the RAF or the Luftwaffe, with eight different planes including fighters and bombers.

There are four campaigns to choose from, and each is made up of a series of missions. Your objective is to keep completing the missions successfully and win the war. The three levels of play are: **Practice**, which gives you a free flight; **Pilot**, a full wartime mission in which you either fly planes or serve as a gunner in a bomber; and **Controller**, where you use strategy (your head) to create your own missions and then fly them.

You can be awarded medals and be promoted for your heroic conduct, but if you fail too many missions you will soon

retire and the game will end. You'll also lose if you crash ... RIP.

If you're a very impatient person, there's an accelerated mode that takes you straight into the action. Autopilot is helpful as it takes control of the plane and hunts for bandits. (*Hmmm - did they have autopilots back in WWII? - Ed*)

If you just like to sit back and enjoy the action there's an autogun mode, so your plane will automatically shoot down bogies. Getting shot up can be a pain - your gun's jammed, elevators are gone, so what do you do? Simple! Just press a key and presto! You've suddenly jumped into your wingman's plane, which is in perfectly good nick. You can also jump to other planes in your squadron.

Pressing F10 brings up a menu bar that allows you to choose your rank, scenery detail, whether your enemies are aces and how much sound you want (similar to

FACTBOX

A nicely produced game let down by some boring moments - it's possible to fly around and hit nothing for quite a while! Even so, the strategic mission planning option will more than make up for this if you're looking for a thinking-man's flight game.

Ratings

Graphics:	90%
Sound:	87%
Gameplay:	63%
Overall:	76%

Distributed by Sega/Ozisoft (02) 317 0000. RRP \$69.95.



Falcon and Flight Of The Intruder).

Graphics and view modes are superb - there's even a tactical view mode to show you where the enemy is. During flight, if you switch on the video you can watch and re-watch your favourite dogfights. You can also take pictures of the scenery.

The most action in the game itself is when you dogfight with the enemy. This can get frustrating because often you can't catch the enemy with your plane and they are just a small pixel moving up and down on the screen way out of your gun's range. In fact, this is the weakest point in the game - overall, the graphics are great and the soundtrack is brilliant, but to my mind there's simply not enough excitement. In some missions I was more likely to die of boredom than enemy gunfire.

Even so, the game design options and the fun of flying will give keen air-enthusiasts plenty of fun. □



Hailed as one of the best games of the year, Syndicate breaks new ground as a fully interactive RPG. It also breaks plenty of heads. Wanna know more? Read on, as Phil Campbell takes you into a very bleak looking future.

SYNDICATE

The world of 2120 is not a pretty place. Canyons of concrete, steel- and-glass mountains, parks of synthetic turf - not the sort of place you would choose to visit. Even worse, these days the whole planet is controlled by a select group of crime cartels, malicious Syndicates whose only business is the business of power.

No wonder the ordinary guy-on-the-street is opting out. These days, escape is easy. Just implant a tiny biochip in your neck and your perceptions of the outside world can be re-tuned completely. Switch on your chip and you'll hear the birds singing and feel the sunshine on your shoulders, even though you're walking through the constant drizzle of acid rain. "Why change the world when you can just change your mind?", says the Biochip slogan. And millions agree.

We're playing *Syndicate*, a game that paints a dark and forbidding picture of the future. I'm an up-and-coming executive in a small European Syndicate - so far we control just Scandinavia, but our ambition is to take over the world.

Naturally, that's a challenge you take on one step at a time. But when you send the right agents to the right place at the right time, you'll be amazed at what you can achieve. Android agents

FACTBOX

A fully animated, fully interactive, three dimensional Role Playing Game. It's atmospheric, moody, and you can control heaps of details. Graphics are small but nice, sound is repetitive but atmospheric, and there's plenty of game lurking under the surface.

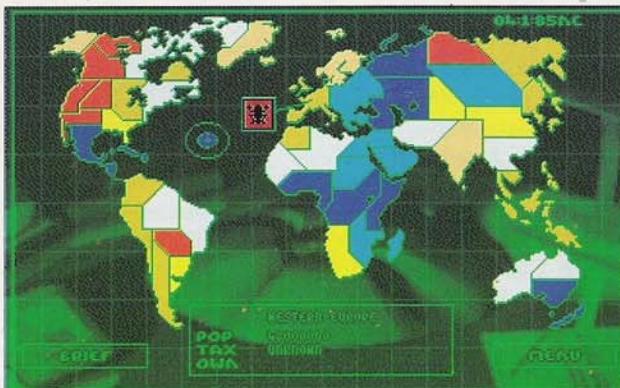
Ratings

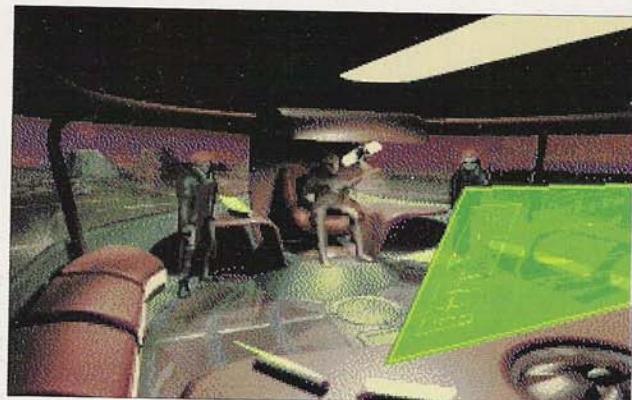
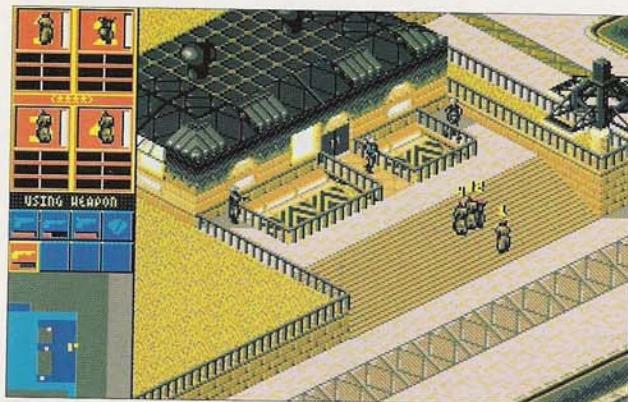
Graphics:	82%
Sound:	73%
Gameplay:	85%
Overall:	81%

Distributed by Electronic Arts (075) 911 388. RRP for Amiga \$89.95 - and six lucky readers will win a free copy!

have come a long way since Maxwell Smart's electronic sidekick Hymie - these days, specially developed Cyborgs do the dirty work, while I pull the strings from a safe distance.

Once human, the cyborgs are part man, part machine. Before each mission, you can bolt together exactly the modules you need, replacing human legs, arms and even brain sections with more powerful biomechanical equivalents. When the mission begins, I control my agents through their neck mounted chips, fine





tuning Intelligence, Perception and Adrenaline levels from my computerised control desk.

In play, the game looks as gloomy as you would expect. A scrolling isometric view of the city fills three quarters of the screen, while my control panel takes up a strip on the left. My agents - up to four at a time - are small, but clearly defined, and move easily among the dark, dangerous looking 22nd Century buildings. To move an agent, simply click on his current position, then the destination point, and he will start walking.

Mission Number One is straightforward. Intelligence reports indicate that

an Army Colonel is stealing resources from my weapons division and using them to equip a group of renegade mercenaries. Stop him!

After fitting two agents with special mechanised leg units - in this case an unnecessary precaution - I send them across the narrow bridge into the renegade Colonel's base. My scanner shows his position as a white blip; third building on the left. In moments, it's over - we outgun two guards, and give the Colonel one final lesson in Syndicate-style diplomacy. Don't mess with the boss!

The second mission is tougher. This time it's a matter of encouraging two

top-level scientists to defect - with a little electronic inducement from my handy Persuadertron. Enemy guards are out in force, so it's far from easy. If you succeed, however, the rewards are huge. With these top boffins on side, another continent is in your hands.

Syndicate is a well engineered game with loads of detail, and to succeed you'll need a good strategic mind. Controlling tax rates to maximise profits and minimise the risk of rebellion, while weeding out traitors, and continually expanding your global empire is a tricky business. And with over 50 missions, *Syndicate* is sure to provide a long-term challenge. □

Electronic Arts Syndicate Competition

Great news! Electronic Arts have six copies of Syndicate to give away to lucky readers of ACAR. Well, not just lucky - talented as well. Read on for details of this ultra easy-to-win competition, and get your entries in as soon as you can.

The Questions

1. Let's start with an easy one. According to the review, how many individual missions are included in *Syndicate*?

2. Here's a trick question to see if you've got any imagination! If you had a Persuadertron, who would you use it on, and what would you want to persuade them?

3. Now for something really annoying - after all, you don't think we'd just give away free games without setting a challenge, do you? I've just run a search-and-replace through

the *Syndicate* review you've just read to find out how many times the word "the" occurs. So starting at the words "The World ...", and ending at "long-term challenge," what's the answer? And be careful - after all, the letters "t-h-e" could be hidden just about anywhere!

Write your answers on the back of an envelope, and send it to:

EA Cometition, c/o PO Box 23 Maclean NSW 2463.

Campo's International Rugby

If Rugby is a gentleman's game, Phil Campbell is certainly not the guy to be reviewing Campo's International Rugby - but he does anyway.

My brother-in-law's cow is called Mrs Campese - not, I am quick to add, because of any reflection on the real Mrs Campese. Far from it. Brother-in-law Frank is actually Rugby star David Campese's number one fan. And the name of his cow is just a way of paying tribute. There's no doubt about it - Rugby fans are a strange breed.

David Campese's Rugby career was launched back in 1982, when he burst onto the world stage as an 18-year-old rookie. Since then, his career path has rocketed upwards. His statistics are enough to make most players green with envy. And now, to top it off, Campese is the star of his very own computer game - *Campo's International Rugby*.

The game opens with a well-rounded selection screen. You can opt for a quick start, or you can fiddle around choosing teams, fixtures and tournament modes. A further sub-menu lets you set the match length and the wind conditions - let's choose a ten minute match, and

add some "Variable Winds", just to make things interesting.

At first glance the simulated playfield is far from impressive. In a word, it's straight-from-the-paintpot green, without a single pixelated grass-patch or weed. Some sport-sims go to considerable trouble to add interest and depth with nice looking lawnmower-stripes across the grass. This one doesn't.

At any one time you can see about 20 yards of the field on-screen - it's a scrolling "from-the-helicopter" view, which has the effect of making all the players look small and stunted. Any hopes you might have had of recognising Campo on the field will be quickly dashed.

Time to play. It's Australia against the Seth Africen Springboks, and the Springboks kick off. My closest player grabs the ball and I start steering him down the screen towards the try line. I duck and weave beautifully, until a large 'Bok brings me down five metres short of the try line. In the scuffle that follows, the ball is nudged over the line - I send another player charging in, he dives onto the ball, and it's a glorious try.

Sadly, I follow up with a serious error of judgement - my brother-in-law's sister asks if she can attempt the conversion kick. She's a devout rugby follower too, so I politely stand aside. The con-

FACTBOX

An action packed Rugby game that's easy to play - so easy, in fact, that if you take your hands off the controls it plays itself! Graphics and sound are nothing to write home about, but they do the job.

RATINGS

Graphics:	69%
Sound:	74%
Gameplay:	79%
Overall:	78%

Distributed by Sega-Ozisoft (02) 317 0000. RRP \$69.95.



version screen features a side-on view of the field - the kicker stands in the foreground, the goal posts and the grandstand are in the rear. Three well timed joystick clicks are required to make the kick - a meter sets your power and direction. Mrs Campbell misses the ball altogether - a previously undocumented feature of the game.

All in all, it's a fast scoring game. On the down side, with thirty players scrambling around the screen and a small brown ball, it's often hard to know exactly what's going on. In the credit column, though, add the fact that scoring is actually quite easy - which means there's plenty of action and excitement.

Last time I heaped praise on a footie game like this, a reader wrote to complain that the game was much too easy. Well, let me be blunt. That's exactly why I liked it. After all, what's the point of dishing out big dollars on a game where it's impossible to score a try? I want action, I want points - and I want them now. It may not be realistic, but who cares? It's a lot more fun.



Calling all serious Science Fiction fans! Mark Harris reports on the sequel to the game based on the first book in the four part Dune trilogy ... well, you know what I mean. It's the fabulous ...

DUNE II

The Battle for Arrakis

Nearly uninhabitable, Dune is an extremely hot and oppressively arid planet. Windstorms with speeds exceeding 200kmh rake the planet surface, and generate violent electrical storms. Clouds of noxious gases accumulate in lower areas and ultraviolet reflections will eventually blind the unprotected eye. Maintenance of vehicles and structures is extremely difficult under these conditions - so the stage is set for *Dune*.

The first thing that impressed me about the game was the opening and the House selection screens. House Atreides has been prominent for thousands of years and has a long tradition of being fair and just administrators. Sources indicate the House Ordos represents a cartel of wealthy families, brought together by the desire for greater security. The

Ordos have little conscience and seem to gain strength through sabotage and terrorism. House Harkonnen is the most savage House in the universe. The Harkonnens have a long history of employing violence and fear to achieve their objectives.

Unlike *Dune I* where you were automatically on the Atreides side, in *Dune II* you are given a choice of one of three Houses. Moving into the game proper you are given easy first and second missions for all Houses - after this, the action really begins. The object of the game is to conquer *Dune* by conquering the other Houses. In order to pay for this you are given some initial credits, but then you have to mine Spice to further finance your war mongering. Spice, a deadly drug, is rare and a valuable commodity, used in trade, barter and monetary systems throughout the Universe.

When you're strong enough you then attack the other Houses, and go on your merry conquering way, blowing great holes in the landscape destroying all before you. This is a game of brutal power and strategy. I found *Dune I* engrossing

FACTBOX

Based on the amazing Frank Herbert Sci-Fi classic, *Dune II* is a point and click style strategy game with plenty of long term appeal.

Ratings:

Graphics:	85%
Gameplay:	80%
Lastability:	80%
Sound:	75%
Value:	80%
Overall:	80%

Distributed by Sega/Ozisoft (02) 317 0000. RRP \$69.95.



My Sardaukar could help defeat the Harkonnen, but you wasted them!

- the sequel did similar things to me but on a larger scale. There are ten missions for each House so there are hours and hours of gameplay to enjoy with some of the later missions taking 5 to 6 hours to complete - so as you can judge this is fairly good value for your hard earned dollar!

The point and click interface is very simple. There is limited speech - unlike the IBM version, which has plenty. (Lazy programmers porting again?) A word of warning for Amiga 500 users ... unless you have the 1 meg Agnus chip (suitably configured) you'll experience difficulties loading the game from a hard drive. If you are playing on floppies you can only use two drives, though thankfully there is not much disk access during the game proper. A bit of technical advice for the 1 meg Agnusless, if you turn all external drives off and open WorkBench and then the *Dune II* icon, then close WorkBench this will load the game. The game is 600 and 1200 compatible. □

Greetings, I am your Mentat Cyril.



Fresh from the local video arcades, Juris Graney checks out the Amiga version of the best beat-em-up of all ...



Walk into your local video-game arcade sometime. You'll see a mass of people crowded around a video game - people jeering, yelling obscenities at each other, clamouring to catch a glimpse of the lone player at the controls. Walking closer, you'll begin to hear weird noises coming from the screen. Shouts of "HA-DO-KEN" curdle the air, along with plenty of grunts, groans and crunches. Yes folks, it's *Street Fighter II*, the hottest game to hit the arcades in years.

And now, thanks to Capcom, you can beat up Blanka and Ryu without having to feed your hard-earned dollars into an arcade machine.

First impressions are positive. It's only 40 seconds from boot-up to the selection screen - rather fast considering the amount of graphics you're loading. Now select between one and two players, choose an input device (keyboard, joystick or joypad), set your difficulty level, and pick one of the eight

possible characters.

Graphically, *Street Fighter II* is as good as you are going to get on the Amiga. It is close enough to the pinnie version - in fact the background characters are the spitting images of the original except for a few minor flaws. For one thing, their muscles seem to be a lot bigger than normal - all the better to hit you with?

Unfortunately, the music is different on the Amiga version, which seems to make the game feel slow. It is very repetitive, though it does have that air of violence in its slow beat. The sound effects, though, are exactly the same as the original. There's nothing better than hearing the familiar sounds of "HA-DO-KEN" and "SONIC BOOM" echo across the room. To add to this, the sounds of fist landing on jaw and head landing on cement are extremely well put together.

The first question I asked myself when I picked up the package was, "Are

FACTBOX

A reasonably faithful copy of the arcade original - graphics are a close match, sound effects are the same, though the music track isn't quite up to scratch. If you're hooked on the arcade version, grab yourself a copy!

Ratings:

Graphics:	76%
Sound:	69%
Playability:	85%
Addictiveness:	95%
Overall:	90%

Distributed by Sega-Ozisoft
(02) 317 0000. RRP \$69.95.

ALL the special moves included?" The answer is Yes. They're considerably slower than the pinnie version, but that's to be expected due to the amount of memory needed for graphics.

All things considered, I must say that I was extremely impressed with the quality of graphics, sound and speed on the Amiga. The only drawback is the continual disk-swapping needed between bouts. Otherwise *Street Fighter II* is the same as the arcade version and well worth the money to buy it. All the special characters are there, like Vega, and all the special moves are there. There is one thing that this game lacks, and that's the incredible atmosphere of the original. If your mum will let 20 teenagers to stand in your room and play the game, then so be it - but I know for a fact that my mum didn't like it much! □



MICHAEL SPITERI'S Adventurer's Realm

Greetings! Welcome to Adventurer's Realm, the section of the mag dedicated to informing and helping those who play adventure and roleplaying games on Commodore computers. There are a lot of new goodies in the Realm this month. In the hint sheet department, Kerrie has three new hint sheets and we are proud to release the Second Adventurer's Realm Hint Disk!

If you are stuck in a game there are a number of avenues open to you. You could write to one of the many Clever Contacts scattered around the nation (write to Kerrie for a listing), or you can write in for one of our many free hint sheets. You could lash out and buy a hint disk or hint book

(there are two of each available!), or if all else fails, drop your problem in to me and it will appear on these pages for all to ponder. The address to write to is:

Adventurer's Realm, 12 Bridle Place, Pakenham, Vic 3810.

Kamikaze Andy (alias Andrew Phang) resides deep in his Dungeon to give you all the latest news from overseas. He's also one of the Realm's hottest Clever Contacts, so if you are stuck in an aggravating roleplaying game (or even adventure game!), drop him a line at the following address (and don't ask him for hint sheets!).

Realm's Dungeon, PO Box 1083, Cannington Vale, WA 6155.

Realm's Hint Books

A stroke of luck has resulted in a handful of the *First Adventurer's Realm Hint Book* being discovered in the vaults of Saturday Magazine.

For just \$9.00 you'll receive a book packed with detailed hints and tips for over 40 adventure games.

Even better, order the *Second Adventurer's Realm Hint Book* for just \$10, and you'll receive a book packed with hints and tips for over 25 adventure and roleplaying games and heaps and heaps of mapping sheets!

To order either book, drop a line to Darren Perry at 21 Darley Rd, Randwick, or give her a ring on (02) 398 5111.

Realm's Hint Disks

Great news, folks! Graeme Beavan has been typing away at his Amiga to come up with a second super hint disk. This second instalment is chock-a-block with over 90 detailed solutions - and none of these were on the first disk! The second disk also features maps for *Faery Tale*, *Dungeon Master*, *Eye of the Beholder* (1 & 2), and *Wonderland*! It's also a lot snazzier with better fonts, a new point'n'click

menu and even some background music!

If you'd like either volume 1 or 2 (or even both) of the hint disks, they cost just \$7.00 each (including p & p), or just \$5.00 each if you supply the blank disk and stamped addressed envelope. Send a cheque (made out to Michael Spiteri) for the required amount to:

Realm's Hint Disk, 12 Bridle Place, Pakenham, Vic 3810.

Free Hint Sheets

"You are standing at the front door. The door has a handle." Open Door. "You open the door and walk into the entry. You can hear a shuffling noise coming from the east. To the north is the kitchen, to the east is the living room." Go East. "You enter the living room. Before you stands a pile of letters two metres high. From the pile comes a shuffling noise."

An ordinary day in the Free Hint Sheet Dept. Somewhere in that pile of letters, Kerrie the Lady of the Realm is sorting out all of your hint sheet requests. Fortunately, there are enough hint sheets to go around, however don't dally in sending in your request. You can choose up to four hint sheets from the list below. They will be sent to you as quickly as possible if you enclose a stamped addressed envelope. If you don't enclose one your request will be lost in the mail!

Good news for hint sheet collectors! Thanks to Stuart George and Matthew Armstrong, we have three new hint sheets. Stuart has contributed *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*, while Matt has sent in *Loom* and *Space Quest II*. Thanks for your effort, guys!

The other hint sheets available are ... *Mortville Manor/Maupiti Island*, *Monkey Island I, II*, *Space Quest III*, *Space V*, *Wonderland*, *Leisure Suit Larry 3*, *Champions of Krynn*, *Kings Quest V*, *Pool of Radiance*, *Zak McKracken*, *Zork I, 2, 3*, *Bards Tale I, 2, 3*, *Hitchhikers' Guide to the Galaxy*, *Guild of Thieves*, *Jinxter*, *The Pawn*, *Corruption*, *Faery Tale*, and the 1993 Clever Contacts Listing.

The only address to write to for free sheets is: Free Hint Sheets, 12 Bridle Place, Pakenham, Vic 3810.

Clever Contacts

Andre Thomas of 9 Dean Place, Lockridge WA 6054 would like to join the merry crusade of Clever Contacts. Andre can help out in ... *Mega-lo-Mania, Hunter, HeroQuest, Eye of the Beholder, Monkey Island 1, Monkey Island 2, Elvira (maps), Kings Quest I-IV (most), Kings Quest V, Myth, Dungeons of Avalon 1 & 2 (most), Curse of Enchantia, Xenomorph, Flash Back, Alien Breed 92.*

Another new Clever Contact is Aaron Danks of 192 Shaftesbury Avenue, Bedford, WA 6052. Aaron has complete solutions of *Ween* and *Larry 1*, and can offer small hints and level codes for *Archer McLean's Pool, John Madden Football, Road Rash* (passwords), *Desert Strike* (passwords), *McDonald Land, Sensible Soccer, History Line*, and *Monkey Island 1 & 2*.

Tony Finn of 214 Fernleigh Road, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650 has taken up the challenge to create a Realm hint sheet for *Eye of the Beholder 1* and *2*. How-

ever, until then he will offer his services as a Clever Contact for these two titles plus over fifty other titles.

The list of Clever Contacts grows even longer with Jen Howell of 30 Frewin Avenue, Woodberry, NSW 2322 joining the ranks. Jen can offer help in ... *Cruise for the Corpse, Monkey Island 1 & 2, Space Quest 1, 2, 3, Kings Quest 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Maniac Mansion, Operation Stealth, Indy Crusade and Indy Atlantis, Larry 1, Fascination, Police Quest and Deja Vu.*

What a month! David Cucvara of 18 Holford Crescent, Gordon, NSW 2072 is a new contact who can help out in the following games ... *Curse of Azure Bonds, Champions of Krynn, Death Knights of Krynn, Ultima VI, Gold Rush, Hero's Quest (Sierra), Space Quest 1-3, Larry 1-3, Kings Quest 1-3, Police Quest 1, 2, Another World and Dragons Breath.* David has set a limit of three games per letter.

And on! Andrew Malcolm of 13 Shirral

Avenue, Kanahooka NSW 2350 can offer help in ... *Hero's Quest 1, 2, Space Quest 1, 2, 3, Kings Quest 1-5, Heart of China, Monkey Island 1 & 2, Loom, Indy and Last Crusade, Enchantress, Hook, Larry 1, 2, 3, Maniac Mansion, Police Quest 1, 2, 3, Alternate Destiny*, plus a heap more games.

Shane Robertson of 14 Sonoma Road, Budgewoi, NSW 2262 would like to update his listing with *Deadline, Stationfall, Ballyhoo, Lurking Horror*, and *Suspect* (Mike: seems like Shane is working his way through an Infocom games pack).

Finally, Mat Armstrong has to have his update included. Write to Matt at 11 Harcombe Street, Bell Post Hill, Geelong, Vic 3215 if you'd like help in *Dark Seed* and *Kings Quest VI*, among other things.

A big thank you to all our new Clever Contacts for offering their services to troubled adventurers, and a big thank you to all the current contacts out there slogging away. If you use the services of a contact, you must enclose a stamped addressed envelope and some funds to cover any photocopy or printing costs.

Adventure Chat

I recently received an ancient parchment with burnt edges written in a language I could not decipher. I thought I would have to delve deep into the adventure archives to work it out, however lucky for me, it came with an ultra modern typed up translation, which started off something like this ... "Dear Sir Michael, Though taking up about four percent of ACAR, the Adventurers Realm is the section of the scroll I most thoroughly read. Congratulations!"

Now, that's my kinda letter! The ancient parchment, translated by Andre (d'Nuit) Thomas has found itself in the Realm's official unreleased scrapbook.

Aaron Danks writes ... "I am a great fan of the *Police Quest* series by Sierra, and I have eagerly been waiting for *Police Quest IV*. What I would like to know is, have they been at least considering it and if they have, what is it about?

"Maybe Sierra can get their 2000 disk problems extinguished and cram it all on two disks and maybe it could run a bit faster because in *PQ3* it took an hour to get from the elevator to the briefing room.

"Another good idea is to maybe make it 3D, or if not it could be much like *PQ2* as I enjoyed this game very much!"

Mike: I don't like your chances of seeing another *Police Quest* instalment, since Jim Walls parted company with Sierra a while back. Still, send your comments to Sierra (Coarsegold, CA 93614), as they like to receive feedback from their fans. Meanwhile, keep an eye out for new titles by Jim Walls under a different company name.

Shane Robertson writes ... "In response to Glen Christie of Blackwood in SA who asked if anyone knew where *Lost Treasure of Infocom II* was, it is available from Code One Computer Services at PO Box 192, Katoomba NSW 2780. It sells for \$95.00."

Mike: Thanks for that info, Shane. On the subject of missing games, Matthew McInally of Moruya in NSW wanted to know if *Eye of the Beholder III* is out on the Amiga. The chances of this happening is quite slim, Matt, however we'll keep our eyes and ears open. *Eye of the Beholder III* has been available on PC for

a couple of months now. You can order your copy from the Games Man.

Matt Armstrong writes ... "I read in the August Dungeon that Brian Moriarty is creating a new game called *The Dig*. Brian wrote *Loom*, which is now one of my favourite games. Do you know much about *The Dig*? The Dungeon didn't mention much about it."

Mike: *The Dig* should be out by the time you read this. The plot begins with an out of control asteroid heading for Earth, around 1998. A space shuttle crew sent out to prevent the damage gets dragged away by an alien trap to a mystery world billions of light years away. The most interesting fact about *The Dig* is that it represents Steven Spielberg's first entry into directing computer games.

A couple of issues back I mentioned a new C64 magazine that was put out by CompuData. Well, the good news is that the magazine is still going strong and getting bigger by the issue. The July issue features heaps of game reviews and tutorials and comes with two public domain disks. For more information, contact CompuPal on (051) 43 0051, or visit them at the Dandenong and Malvern computer swap meets in Melbourne.

The Adventure Problem Centre

This is the area of the Realm where problems are aired and help is given. If you were stuck a few months back, keep reading, you could be in luck today. If you can help out in one of these problems, please do, quickly.

First up, Andrew Malcolm of Kanahooka in NSW would like to know how to kill the ghoul, talk to Holunder, or what to do after you play the harpsichord. The game? Oh yes ... *Ooze Creepy Nights* (by Dragonware).

Andrew also wants to know how to pass the electric door in *Operation Stealth*.

Jen Howell from Woodberry in NSW is stuck in *Hook*. She just can't seem to find the so-called gold in the pots on Hook's ship. You might be missing something earlier on, Jen. Mark Harris has offered to help you out if you send him a saved game.

Daniel O'Brien of Gillieston Heights in NSW is slogging away at *Dune*. Seems he can't supply enough spice for the Emperor. "Explore more!" suggests Mark Harris. You need to build up the spice during the earlier part of the game.

Adventure disk creator Graeme Beavan has come to the rescue of a whole swag of adventurers, so let's get the ball rolling ...

Michael Seymour wrote to Phil Campbell about the Baby Sitter from Hell in *Willy Beamish*. You need to go to the bathroom and get the hair spray from the cabinet. Aim the spray near the ceiling. After Alicia flies into the cloud, she should slow down. Get the mouse from Brianna's bedroom (in the chair cushion), click on the vacuum cleaner then hide behind the couch. Throw the mouse onto the living room end table and when the bat tries to pick it up, use the vacuum cleaner. (Mike: The *Willy Beamish* solution is on Hint Disk 2, as is *Police Quest 3*).

Also troubled was Cassandra Mackersay who in April was stuck trying to find Snake Skull in Leander. Graeme suggests you go left across the waterfall from the place with two snakes. Enter the cave, go all the way down, then jump to the right twice, and presto!

Stuart George was stuck in *Colonel's Bequest* back in August. To deal with the ghost in the cemetery, you simply avoid him by taking the underground passage through the Hedge Garden. Stuart was

also stuck in *Ultima 3* - well, both Wayne Phillips and Mark Harris suggest the following ...

"To get the Mark of the Snake, go to the island south of Death Gulch and enter the dungeon. Peering at gems, lead down to the SW cavern of Level 8 where you will find the Mark."

Matt Armstrong has been trying unsuccessfully to shove a bar of soap down his bikini top. Strange lad! Actually, Matt was playing *Leisure Suit Larry 2*, and what he should have been doing is putting money in the bikini top. Clue courtesy of Graeme again.

David Cucrava also came to the rescue of a couple of adventurers. Firstly, for Jason West who was pulling his hair out in *Ultima VI* ... "Captain John is at the bottom of Hythloth. You can get there via the Shrine of Humility (via the moonstone) then travel west until you get to Hythloth and go down. Or, go to the Slab via moonstone and you will arrive in the Gargoyle Realm. Go south and east until you come to a cave. Don't talk to anyone or attack anyone on the way. It is a good idea to be invisible when you go there. Dr Cat wants a book called Snilwit's Big Book of Board Game Strategy, which can be found at the library at the Lycaeum." (Also thanks to Stuart George for his tip).

Then for Dr Demilio who was stuck in *BattleTec* ... "To get heaps of money, only invest in the Nashan Division (NASDIV). Enter all the buildings and do everything possible in them (!!!). Buy everything you see (buy a heavy environmental suit and inferno for all members). Train everyone in your party. If you fight a Mech and you have a Mech Pilot in your party, kill it with the Inferno and get it repaired for your own use. If a party member dies, load a saved game."

Matt Armstrong is still stuck in the *Omnicon Conspiracy*. Any help at all would be appreciated! He is also still stuck in *Dagger of Amon Ra* in the furnace room. Any takers?

Aaron Danks is stuck obtaining the locker combination in *Police Quest III*. "It's in the manual!" screams Mark Harris. Check your manual out, Aaron.

I received more general hints and tips, but I'm afraid I've run out of space, so these will be published next month.

Realm's Trading Post

Yes, folks, the title says it all. This is the area of the Realm where you can advertise absolutely free to sell, swap or search for game titles. Please don't try to flog pirated stuff here - it's not a very nice thing to do.

Andre Thomas (see Clever Contacts for address) has the AD&D Gold Collectors Set (contains five games) and *Red Storm Rising*. He will sell or swap these games for *Civilization*, *Global Effect*, *Vikings*, *A-Train* and *Populous 2*.

Jeremy Taylor of 23 Cambridge St, Bunbury, WA 6230 has for swapping *F16 Falcon*, *Monkey Island*, *Double Dragon* and *Robocop 3*. He would like *Indy and Last Crusade*, *Eye of the Beholder*, *M1 Tank Platoon*, and *Civilization*. Ring Jeremy after 6pm (EST) during the week on (097) 911 560.

David Cucrava (see Clever Contacts for address) currently owns *Curse of the Azure Bonds* and *Gold Rush* on the Amiga and he is willing to buy or swap for *Ultima 1, 2, 3* (pack), *DM's Assistant Vol 1*, and *Barbarian 2* (not *Psynopsis*).

Dale Scott of 15 Skyes Avenue, Innaloo WA 6018 is in the market for *Sim City* for the Amiga. He'll dish out up to a generous \$50 for it!

Andrew Malcolm (see Clever Contacts for address) currently owns *Epic*, *Heart of China*, *Space Quest III*, *Loom*, *Ooze*, *Monkey Island 1*, plus a few other games, and he would like to swap them for some good games, like *Knights of the Sky* for example.

Grahame Welsh of 131 Maryborough Qld 4650 is searching high and low for *Champions of Krynn* on the Amiga. He's also after (if it was ever released) *Secret of the Silver Blades* for the Amiga. Grahame sounded pretty desperate, so ring him on (071) 231 778 if you can help out.

The Dungeon

by
Kamikaze Andy

At last, the Amiga conversions of the latest Sierra hit adventures - *King's Quest VI: To Heir is Human*, and *Space Quest V: The Next Mutation* are ready to ship! Word from within Sierra's Coarsegold, CA offices is that the former will be released "very soon now" with *Space Quest V* not much further behind. However, there is no confirmation that any of Sierra's upcoming releases such as *Gabriel Knights* will also make it to the Amiga (at least, not this year!). There is a strong chance that *Freddie Pharkas* (the latest from the guy in the Leisure Suit, Al Lowe) will make it early next year!

Sierra seems to be investing heavily in the CD-ROM market, with support for the new Tandy VIS CD-ROM, as well as multimedia MPC versions of all of its upcoming releases. Whether this will spill

over into support for Commodore's CDTV remains to be seen. I guess it all depends on the success of the upcoming CD32.

At the last Chicago CES, one of the more noticeable features was the increase in the number of CD-ROM only games (as previously mentioned in Dungeons past). Pretty soon, the Dungeon might find itself with more information to report on the CD-ROM scene than on the Amiga RPG/Adventure scene, which would have seemed unbelievable only a year ago.

Not all is in vain - look out for *Simon The Sorcerer*, all ye Amiga adventurers (especially fans of the LucasArts type of adventure games, like the superb *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*). This product from UK based AdventureSoft provides great puzzles, a lot of visual humour (through some excellent animation and cute graphical touches), and a storyline that is sure to warm the hearts (yep - a "feelgood" adventure). You play young apprentice sorcerer Simon, whose quest is to seek out the Grand Wizard.

Zorkers beware! *Return To Zork* has been confirmed as a product due out from Activision, but at this stage, only on PC and CD-ROM formats. As with the last "Infocom" game from Activision (*Leather Goddesses Of Phobos II* - which is still in limbo although an Amiga version has reportedly been completed), *Return To Zork* features a graphical interface, so point and click to your heart's content. The CD-ROM version will feature live actors straight from Hollywood (either it's prestigious to appear in a computer game these days, or the recession is hitting Tinseltown hard too).

And from LucasArts - *Day Of The Tentacle (Maniac Mansion II)* is fun fun fun! Totally cartoonish, totally wild, totally addictive. The Amiga version is getting ready to hit the software shelves as you read this. Other possible LucasArts games include *Sam And Max Hit The Road* (based on LucasArts artist and comic book author/artist Steve Purcell's infamous Sam and Max creations), *The Dig* (another LucasArts adventure personally handled by Steven Spielberg himself), and yes, THAT range of games from THAT series of films ... namely, *X-WING!* The success of LucasArts first space simulator based on the *Star Wars* series has prompted a rethink on an Amiga version, and eager Rebels can prepare to strap into their *X-Wings* sometime in the new year. Let's

hope that LucasArts release an Amiga 1200 version utilizing the new graphics capabilities of this machine!

(*X-Wing* has already spawned two expansion disks, a CD-ROM only game (*Rebel Assault*), and *Tie Fighter* - you get to play the bad guys this time. Shows how far behind we Amiga gamers are, but all is not lost, if LucasArts and other software companies get behind our machine!)

In the weird licensing corner - we have - the one and only Intracorp (some of their previous licenses include *Home Alone 2* and *The Taking Of Beverly Hills*). This time, the company is going all out with games based on previous hit movies like *Wayne's World*. Help Wayne and Garth rescue their TV show by raising funds to keep the bank manager at bay (yes, it's an adventure ... of sorts ... with plenty of babes thrown in).

Intracorp are also banking on potential hits (or at least, movies that will attract a lot of attention) such as the upcoming *Surf Ninjas Must Die* (you play this radical surfing dude, right, called Johnny, right, who's on a journey from the land of the Great White Board (California), right, and make your way to the Orient for loads of fun times, right ... yes, it's another adventure ... right), and the new remake of *The Beverly Hillbillies*. Oh, and did I mention *T2: Chess Wars*? Yes, a CHESS game (of all things) using characters from Arnie's hit movie.

(For those of you not making any connection between chess and RPGs - err - well, I could say that (a) both involve SOME form of strategy, (b) there is no connection at all, (c) Intracorp pay me to say this, or (d) all of the above).

Finally, some news from the home of flight (and all sorts of other) simulations. MicroProse recently previewed two new adventures using its graphical interface (first introduced in *Rex Nebular And The Cosmic Gender Bender*), and both appear to be much better products than *Gender Bender*, in terms of graphics, and storyline. The first is called *Return Of The Phantom*, while the other, *DragonSphere*, has elements of fantasy and RPG in it. As with most games these days, it is hard to predict whether these adventures will make it to the Amiga platform (though MicroProse have been quite supportive of the Amiga in the past).

Oh, and for *Sim City* fans - watch out for *SimCity 2000*!

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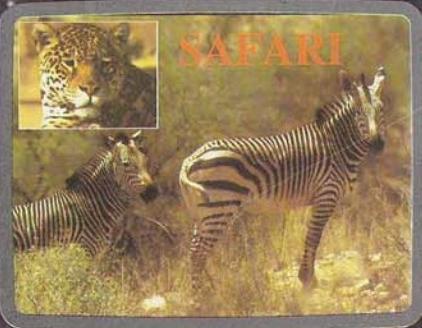
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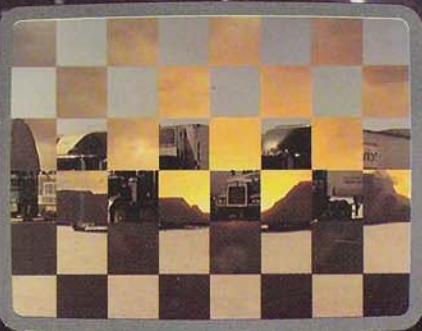
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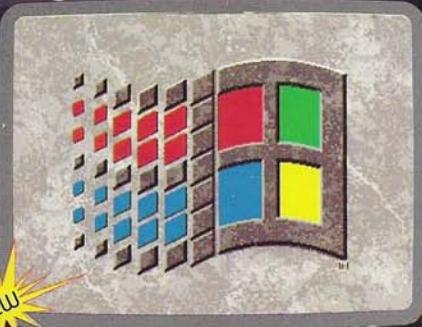


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